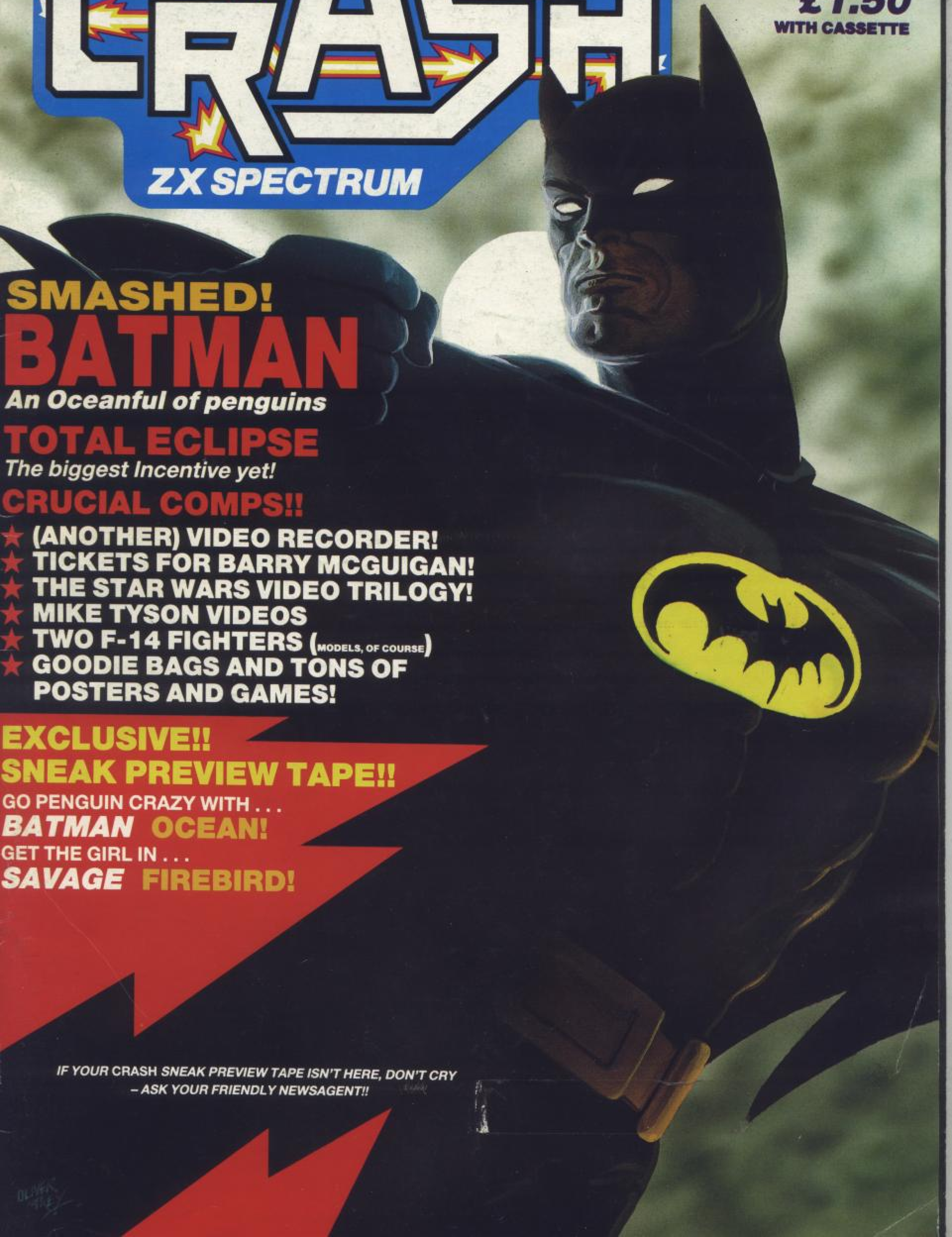
SPECIAL PENGUIN ISSUE!

CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
NO. 60 JANUARY 1989
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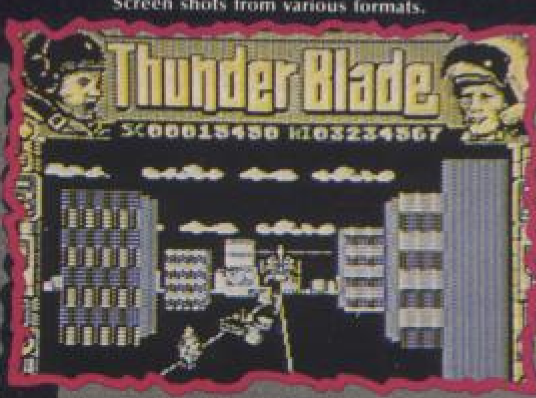
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CRASH
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First off, please accept my apologies for the lack of a Stormlord demo on the cover cassette. ← Raf's Fault!! Even so, Batman and Savage are pretty damn impressive, I'm sure you'll agree.
In this issue, check out the joysticks feature on page 78, and Lloyd's fairly proud of the 1988 look back on page 46.
Next issue sees a massive feature on films featuring computers.
So, till next munf...
Dominic Handy
PS: Hope I get a new pen next munf!

ANOTHER SNEAK PREVIEW TAPE

IF day$>'Christmas' THEN GO TO LINE 2: Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year to everyone! If you've not finished reading last issue yet, then don't worry! But, this issue is a real scorcher. The best bit of which is the Penguinised cover and cassette featuring the second CRASH Smashed *Batman* and Firebird's *Savage*. GUARANTEED GREATNESS!!

LLOYD STICKS TO IT

A thicket of joysticks. From the elegant curves of the Navigator to the blocky angles of the RAM Delta, we put them all to the 'Mark Caswell plays *Decathalon*' test. After close analysis of the debris we put together the ultimate guide.

The year in which budget games dominated the charts and rereleases proliferated: Lloyd Mangram takes his traditional look back over the year that was. 365 days (366 in fact! – Ed) of Spectrum software history, all the Smashes and loads of Hot Shots.



DO IT YOURSELF

ISSUE 61
FEBRUARY ISSUE ON SALE JANUARY 26

REGULARS

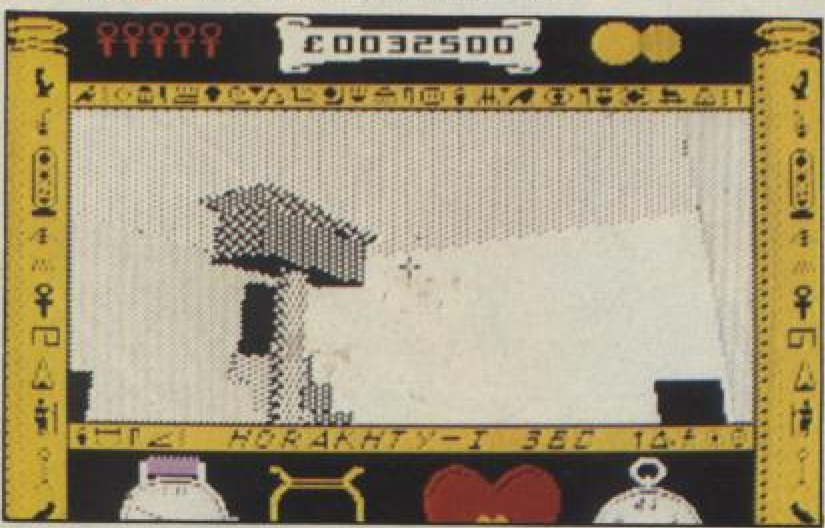
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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL CRASH READERS

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NEWS

UNCLE PIGG GETS THE CHOP

THAT HUMOROUS piggy comic, *Oink* has sadly been sent to slaughter. Featured in a special CRASH supplement in Issue 42, to promote a Spectrum game that never appeared, the comic has now ceased publication. Apparently public interest had declined to the point where future issues would begin losing money. To avoid this the publishers, **Fleetway Publications**, decided to call it a day.

Fans needn't be too saddened however since the comic's porcine spirit lives on. The *Oink* Editorial team are still going ahead with the Christmas annual and yet more tasteless jokes will be appearing in a Summer Special next year. In the meantime *Oink*'s freelance team are working on a secret new project.

CODE MASTERS UNITED

THOSE LITTLE Darlings at **Code Masters** are all kitted up for their very first full-price release. Called *Pro Soccer Simulator* it features four football games in one package: street soccer, 11-a-side league, 5-a-side indoor and soccer skills (sounds like a compilation to me).

The move into full-price software follows that of **Alternative** who recently announced their new **Again Again** label. Meanwhile David and Richard Darling have been gaining yet more television exposure in the 'True Or False' section of the penultimate edition of *Network 7*, where viewers had to guess whether they were really software producers or not! (We missed the following edition, so we're still arguing about it.)



THE CRASH JINX?

WELL WE'RE not that superstitious here at CRASH, but it seems that whichever company or magazine we mention has an instant curse put on it (perhaps it's that mysterious Samara).

After all, no sooner than Mark Caswell mentioned *Oink* in last month's comics special than the comic folded (so we dropped the piece). Then Phil King covered French software house **FIL** in the Eurovision feature (also last issue) and that's in dire straits as well. All CRASH staff have now been instructed to avoid walking under ladders, carry rabbits' feet at all times and never ever mention the number 13 (aarrrgh, I just did!).

NEW JOB FOR PAT

QUESTION: What would you call Postman Pat, if he became a dairy farmer? Answer: Cow Pat. (Thanks, Phil – Ed.) Well don't worry, kiddies favourite Pat hasn't left his day job yet (although we're told he staged a one man picket in Greendale during the postal dispute). Instead, he's decided to supplement his meagre income by appearing in his own computer game by **Alternative**, which is promised to 'appeal to all age groups'. According to the Alternative this is the first licence ever obtained by a budget house.

A rather more controversial boast is Alternative's claim to be the UK's top software house after topping the Gallup chart (for all formats) many times in the last few months. Hoping for another smash-hit Alternative are set to rerelease **Audiogenic**'s originally full-price *Graham Gooch's Cricket* (65%, Issue 25). With Gooch now England captain this could be a shrewd move – if the team ever get to tour any where . . .



ZEPPELIN SEEK INSPIRATION

NEWLY-FORMED Digital Inspiration have signed a one-year sales and marketing deal with **Derek Brewster**'s, Tyneside-based **Zeppelin Games**. Under the agreement, Zeppelin will rerelease a number of old **Design Design** games, including *Nexor* (81%, Issue 33), *Forbidden Planet* (86%, Issue 26) and *2112 AD* (83%, 26).

Forthcoming original budget releases will include distinctly budget-sounding titles such as *Ninja Space Troopers*, *Scooba Warriors* and *Combat Droid Simulator*.

A further connection between the two concerns is that Digital Inspiration also have a 50% stake in Zeppelin's new full-price label, **Kognito**. The move into full-price software by budget companies seems to be all the rage, as are football management games – Digital Inspiration are currently working on one for their lucrative Kenny Dalglish licence.

TRANSATLANTIC INCENTIVE

CHUFFED WITH the all-formats, UK success of its Freescape games (*Driller*, *Dark Side* – with *Total Eclipse* soon to come), **Incentive** now have their sights set on the lucrative American market. To this end they've recently signed a deal with American software house, **Epyx**. This gives Epyx exclusive right to the distribution of the Freescape games in the USA. And things are certainly looking promising – *Driller* has already received half a million dollars worth of advance orders in the USA.

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ZX SPECTRUM

SNEAK PREVIEW TAPE

Still haven't decided what to splurge your Christmas cash on? Don't believe *Batman*'s as incredibly fantastic as we said? Well, hold on fast to your cash as CRASH takes you on a roller coaster of arcade action with two amazing, fully playable demos.

BATMAN

OCEAN

Ocean's dynamic duo

Gotham City's most famous vigilante returns to the Spectrum in Smashing form (see page 14). The most compelling arcade adventure we've reviewed for ages, it's kept Phil King glued to his +2 ever since it came in. Amazingly it includes two complete adventures, The Penguin causing a flap on one side of the tape, and The Jokers's fatal farce on the other. While the demo won't let you solve any crimes, there's still plenty of puzzles to baffle you while you search for clues in the Batcave and Gotham side streets. The latter are busy with the comings and goings of various thugs, including one diabolical super-villain, so it's a good idea to get the batarang as soon as possible.

Out soon for £8.95 on cassette and £14.95 on disk the quest for truth, justice and the American way starts here . . .

SAVAGE

FIREBIRD

A manic fighting frenzy

As one of the most spectacular games around, this three-part arcade game went straight into the Microdealer charts at 15. Its three multiloads offer three distinct game-styles. The first load has Savage fighting through an army of castle minions and giant guardians. After that it's a high-speed, first-person perspective trip through Death Valley dodging through all sorts of monsters. Load three returns to the castle where an eagle has to be guided through numerous traps in search Savage's kidnapped girlfriend. Out now at £8.99 on cassette, programmers Probe Software consider it one of their best games ever (well, they would, wouldn't they?).

The demo features a completely playable portion of the first load, finishing only after one of the dragon guardians have been killed. Reviewed just last issue this is the most colourful demo ever.



Hope you'll have great fun playing this super Sneak Preview Tape.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all CRASH readers.

THE CRASH SNEAK PREVIEW TAPE

BATMAN (OCEAN) SAVAGE (FIREBIRD)

THE CRASH ZX SPECTRUM

SNEAK PREVIEW TAPE



LOADING INSTRUCTIONS
Connect a suitable cassette recorder to your Spectrum. Rewind your Sneak Preview Tape to the beginning. Type **LOAD""** on your Spectrum and press ENTER. Press PLAY on your cassette player.
For more information consult your Spectrum manual.

CONTROLS

BATMAN
OCEAN
Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair joysticks.
Keys:
definable

SAVAGE
Firebird
Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair joysticks.
Keys:
Leap .... Q
Crouch .... A
Left .... O
Right .... P
Fire .... M

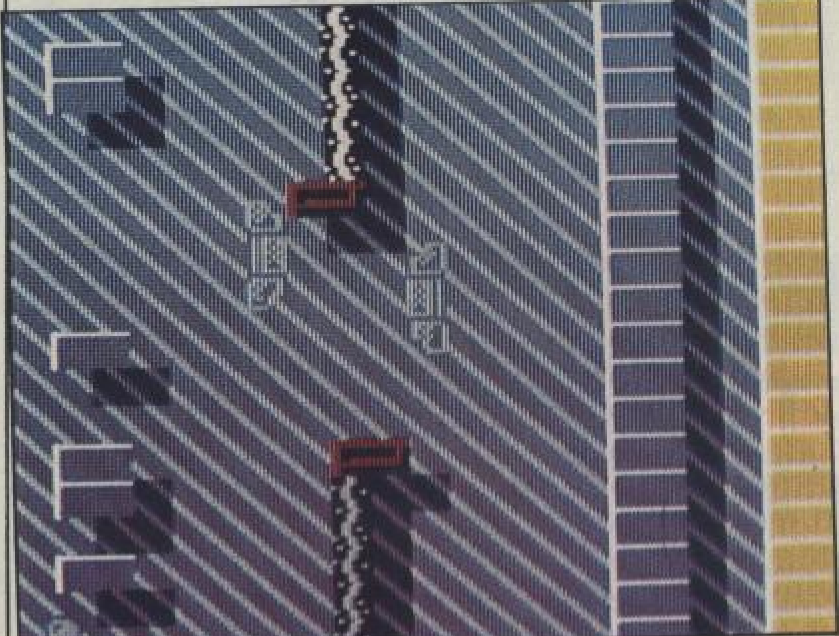
See CRASH issue 60 for more details

TRAZ

Producer **Game Busters**
Bat 'n' ball **£2.99 cass**
Author **Imagitec**

For the uninitiated, *TRAZ* stands for TRansformable Arcade Zone. Why 'Transformable', you ask – well, because this is one game which you can alter to your heart's content, due a great construction kit.

The basic game is *Breakout* – it's all about knocking out coloured blocks by deflecting a tiny ball with one or more bats. Some of these blocks release question marks which have an unpredictable effect on the bat, speeding it up or even making it go round in circles. Some types of block are indestructible though, while others are transparent and alter the path of the ball as it travels through them. Monster generators create nasties which hover around the screen deflecting any balls which hit them. If all the balls are lost through traps at the bottom of the screen, so is one of your three lives. Complete a screen and one or more exits



▲ **Designer *Breakout* with** *TRAZ*

appear. Only when all the screens have been visited is the game over. In addition, a two-player mode allows a daring duo to play simultaneously, taking control of one bat in turn, or two or more bats at the same time, switching bats every so often to mutual confusion.

All the block types and traps can be moved around via the designer to create new screens. Also, any number of vertical and/ or horizontal bats may be placed onscreen along with the starting position of the ball. Up to 64 different screens can be created and saved to tape. Screens are linked by definable exits, and once you've created a whole set you can play the game proper. Or if that sounds too exhausting use the predefined set of screens.

Although there are undoubtedly better *Breakout* variants around, the way *TRAZ* allows you to design your own screens makes it much more fun. In fact, just as much amusement can be had fiddling with the editor as in actually playing the resulting game. But for the budget price, it represents a great deal.

PHIL 78%

MARK The playing areas are bright and colourful, and the action is certainly fast with screen after screen full of bouncing balls and weird monsters. The screen edit facility is a good idea, not exactly novel but it's great fun and simple to use (even for me). With the amount of *Breakout* games on the market I don't think *TRAZ* would be a big hit if full priced, but at a budget price you'd be daft to miss out.

84%

THE ESSENTIALS

JOYSTICKS Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
SOUND nothing more than the odd beep
OPTIONS one or two players. Design your own screens

77% GRAPHICS Mostly simple blocks, but colour is used well
80% PLAYABILITY Improved by the fascinating two-player mode
80% ADDICTIVE QUALITIES Designing your own screens is amazingly compulsive

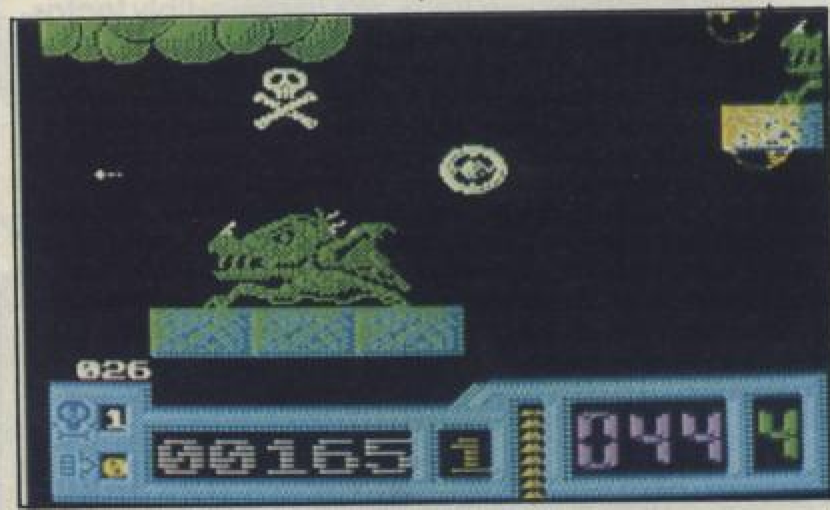
OVERALL 81%

NETHER

● ***Dangers in the nether regions***

Producer **Hewson**
Priceless diamonds **£7.99 cass**
£12.99 disk
Author **Chris Wood from a concept by Jukka Tapanimaki**

In a world far different from our own, you take the part of a spaceship pilot who has accidently warped into a hostile



environment. To escape you must collect enough of the local currency, diamonds, to escape.

The game is made up of various levels, you have the choice of starting on the first, fifth or ninth – and I definitely advise the first for beginners. This eight-way scrolling world is filled with dangers. Demons spit deadly bubbles into your path, alien generators spew out monsters and goat's heads spit acidic blood. You've still got your trusty laser though, and the monsters can yield some very useful items when shot. Demon killers are self-explanatory as are brick smashers, but occasionally a question mark appeals which can bestow an extra life, invulnerability, uncontrollability or reverse controls (nasty).

Each level has a set amount of diamonds to be collected, very little time to collect them in. Hourglass objects can extend the time limit by 30 seconds if collected, but diamonds are always hard to find, let alone collect. On many levels tortuous mazes are created by strange alien structures, such as huge spikey globes and big skulls lurking among the walls.

Occasionally a secret door can be found in a wall which will give you access to somewhere previously blocked off, more

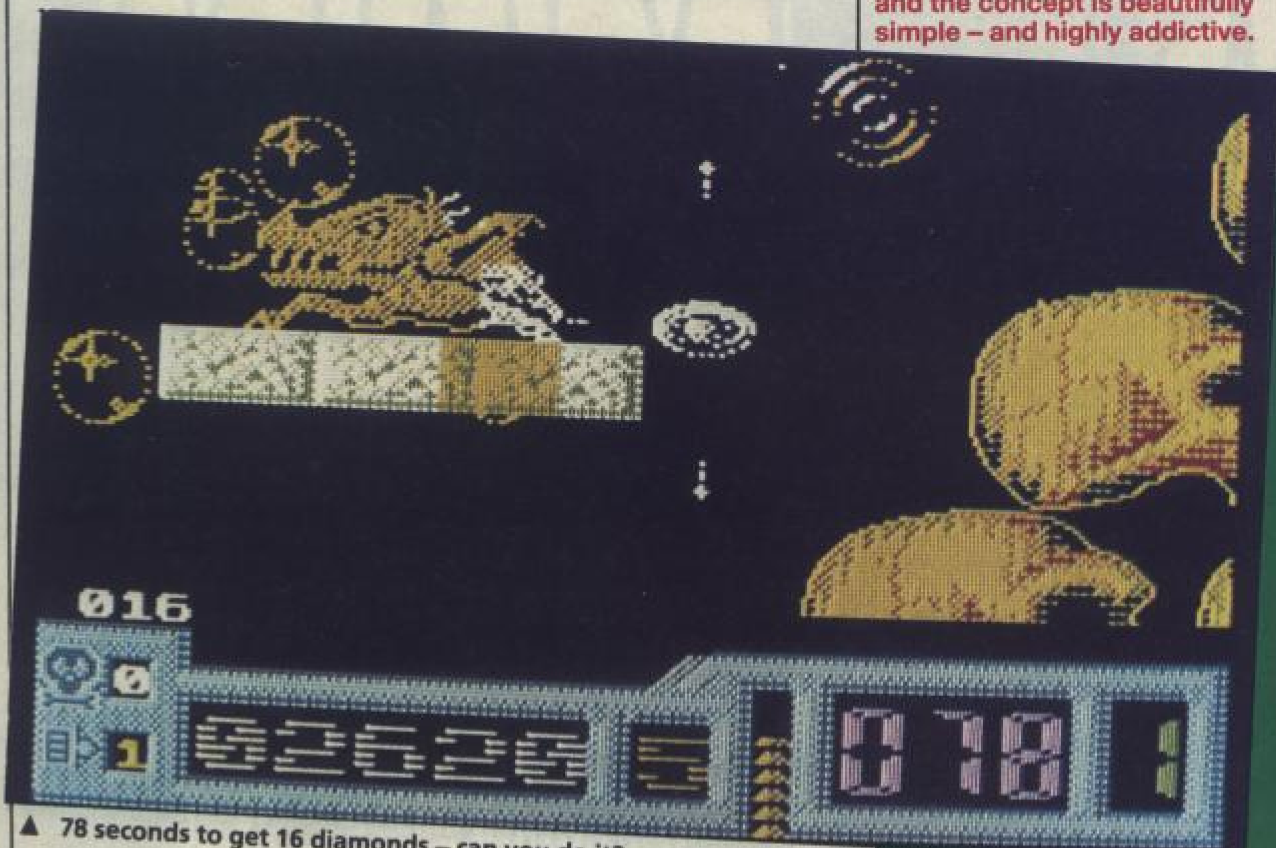


▲ **Warping about in the infinitely strange land of *Netherworld***

RWORLD

PHIL **The first thing that strikes you about *Netherworld* is the amazingly noisy 128K ingame tune which is so distorted, it sounds like a computer version of the Jesus And Mary Chain! (Who? – Ed.) I suppose it's better than complete silence. The gameplay's the thing, though, and the concept is beautifully simple – and highly addictive. All the graphics are well-drawn and surprisingly colourful (so much so it doesn't look a like a Spectrum game at all). Unfortunately the price of this is some distinctly jerky scrolling, but even this minor technical flaw can't diminish the gameplay. *Netherworld* represents an intriguing twist to the collect-'em-up theme and as well as being instantly playable, is deviously addictive.**

86%



▲ 78 seconds to get 16 diamonds – can you do it?

common are transporters to zap you from A to B. Ten levels of horrific happenings stand between you and freedom, so run like hell, because perhaps that is where you are.

Don't be fooled by the pretty graphics – gameplay is tough. But after several tries you quickly learn the best way to deal with the various problems that arise. Collecting enough diamonds to enable you to warp the next screen is difficult enough, but the added aggro of a timer is nailbiting stuff. Take a good look at *Netherworld*, and pray that you never get lost in such a place.

MARK 90%

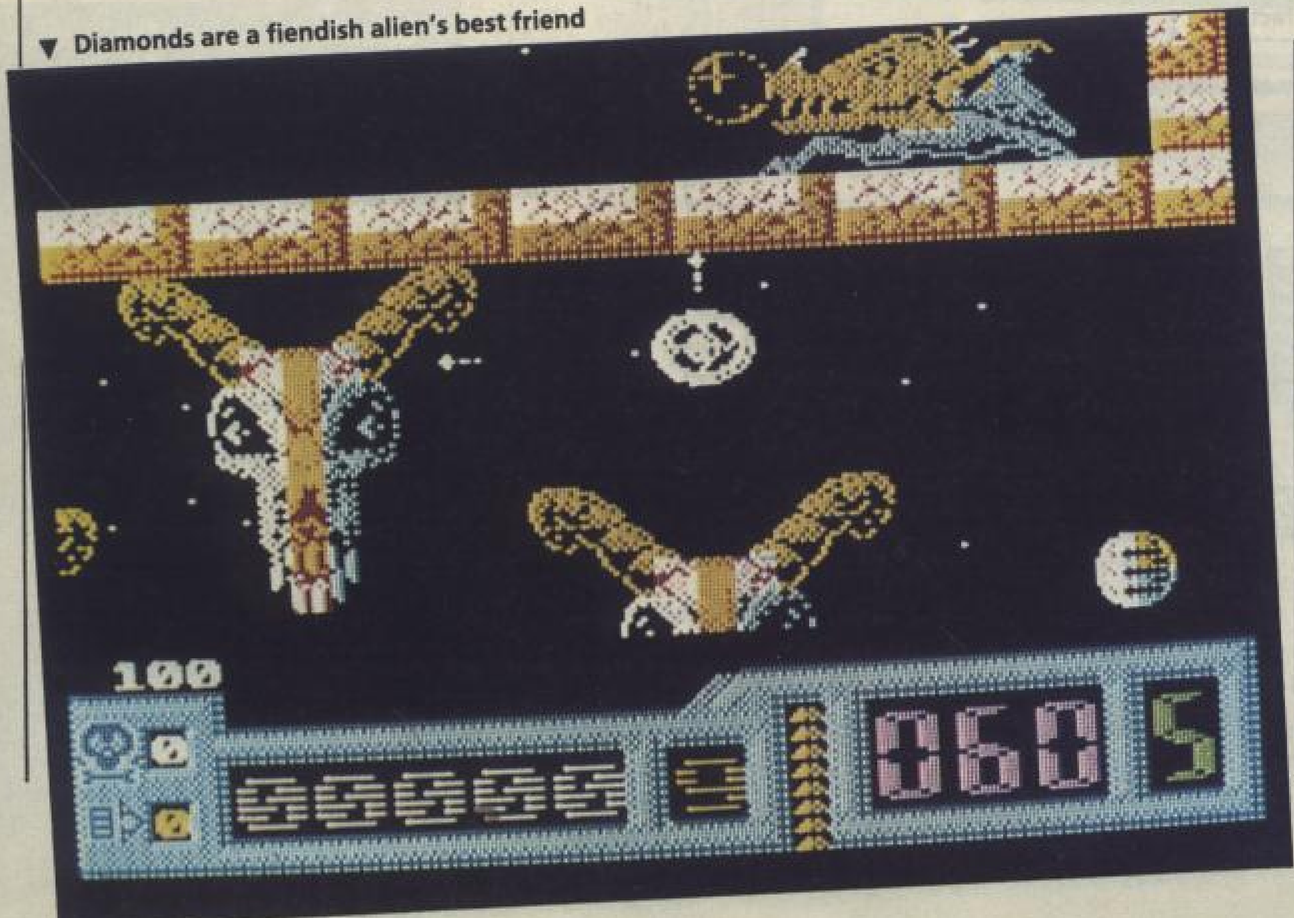
GET DOWN TO THE BEAT

- Fire continuously, there's no ammo limit so go wild!
- If you are finding it difficult to get a certain diamond, don't forget you can use the brick-smashing icon.
- If there are only one or two diamonds left to find, use the teleporters to enable you to see a large area as you're teleporting.
- Pick up hourglasses to increase time limit.
- Move along the walls to see if there's a secret entrance.
- Make yourself a map of the game showing what teleporter takes you where – it saves you time and when you've finished the game you could send it in to me!

After *Cybernoid*, *Marauder* yet another Hewson classic. It boasts fast-action play and perfectly detailed graphics packed with colour. The basic aim is a simple one – collecting diamonds – which may not seem very exciting, but the way it has been implemented is what makes it worth while. The tunes and sound effects complement the game perfectly and add to the overall mayhem. If you want something original, addictive and great to look at, buy *Netherworld* now.

NICK 88%

▼ Diamonds are a fiendish alien's best friend



THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: large, colourful demons and skulls etc, but the scrolling of the play area is a bit jerky
Sound: weird, distorted ingame 128K tune plus some nice spot effects
General rating: another fine game from Hewson and a great conversion from Jukka Tapanimaki's original C64 game

Presentation	83%
Graphics	87%
Sound	78%
Playability	87%
Addictive qualities	85%

OVERALL 88%

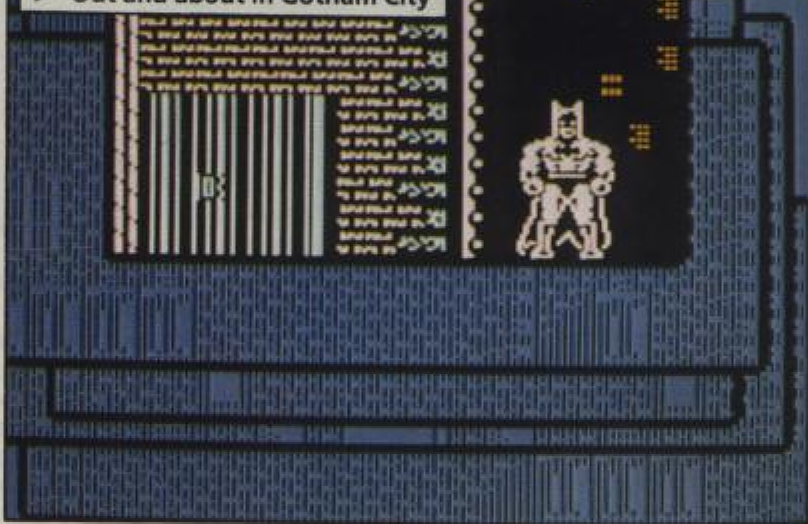
BATMAN

● ***Holy cow, Batman – we've been digitised!***

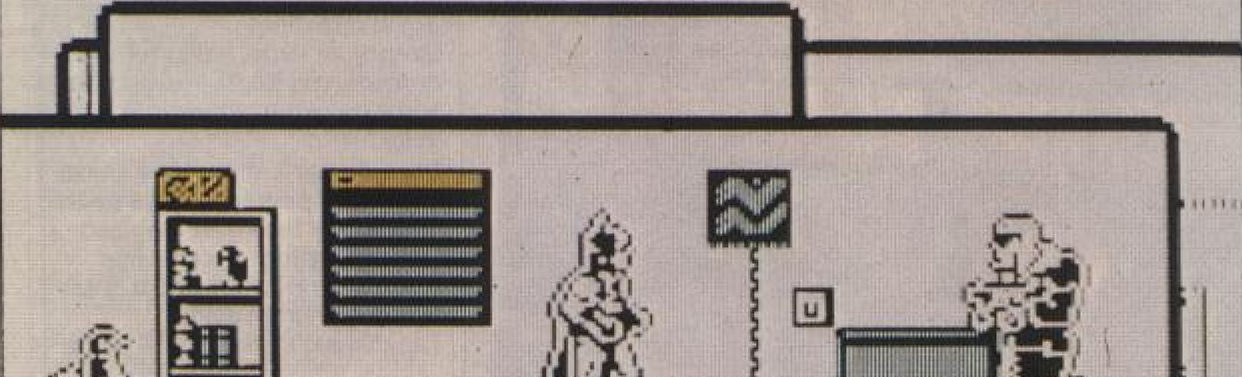
Producer Ocean/Special FX
Bat-dollars £8.95 cass
£14.95 disk
Author Jonathan Smith, graphics Charles Davies

The caped crusader doesn't seem to have aged well on the Spectrum. First there was Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond's isometric *Batman* (93%, Issue 28) arcade adventure which, while a great game, featured a distinctly plump superhero. For the new game the hero's thankfully slimmed down, but now he's started misplacing his false teeth!

Batman's old opponents have yet to sit back and meekly start collecting their old age pension, though. No, The Penguin and The Joker are back to playing havoc with



▶ Out and about in Gotham City

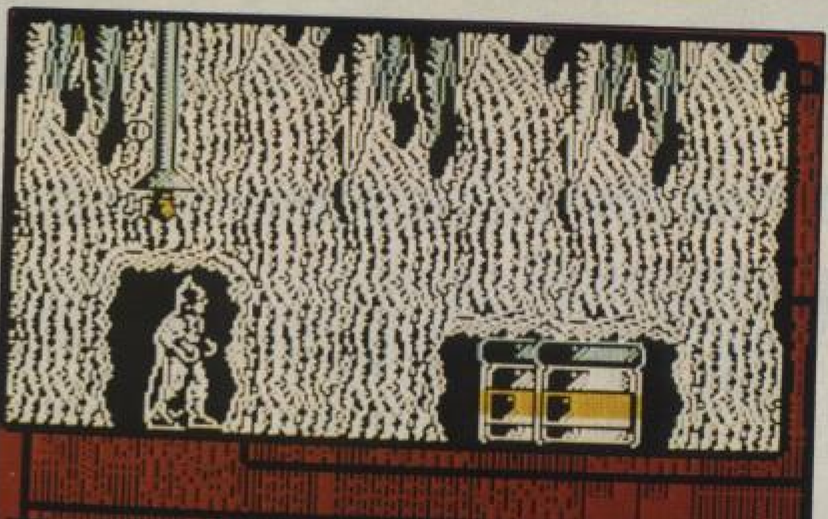


▶ Snooping around The Penguin's factory

Gotham City again. The criminal misdeeds of the troublesome twosome fill one game each, with The Penguin's 'A Bird In The Hand' on one side of the tape and The Joker's 'A Fête Worse Than Death' on the other. Holy batvalue-for-money there, Batman.

In the first adventure The Penguin (you know, the one in the top hat with an umbrella and silly laugh) has come up with a new plan to take over the world. Only millionaire Bruce Wayne, alias Batman, can foil this evil scheme. Kerpowing and biffing his way into the penguin-producing factory, he can halt production by destroying the master computer.

A more personal concern provides Batman's motivation in the second game – Robin



▶ The Boy Wonder's missing and the Batmobile's been nicked!

has been kidnapped (again). The only clue is a playing card left inside the Batcave – the trademark of the evil Joker. Under close examination it gives a vital clue to the Boy Wonder's whereabouts.

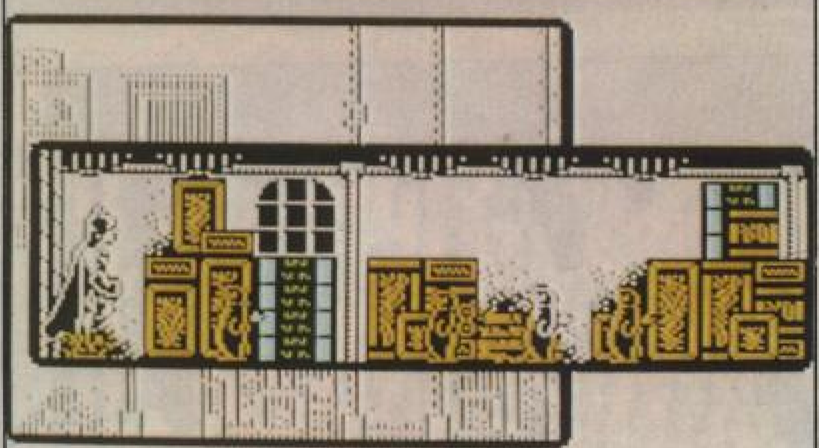
Only by using his skill and considerable number of 'Bat' implements can Batman do his obligatory good deed for the day. In both scenarios, the action begins at the famous Batcave, with Batman gracefully sliding down a pole from his mansion above. Clues and a variety of useful items can be found by a careful search of all the rooms in the Batcave.

But while life may be safe here, it's only by venturing outside that the dastardly crimes may be solved. Once outside Batman faces a horde of nasty thugs and machine-gun-toting henchmen. These can be dispatched by a bit of Batboxing or by throwing the Batarang at them. Get careless and your energy's soon drained by a hail of bullets. Energy can be restored by eating if you can find some food in time.

Objects collected are put into Batman's inventory, which is accessed by pressing fire and down. A simple icon system allows objects to then be used or dropped. It's also possible to turn the sound on/off, alter the background



▶ Holy robots, Batman – don't p-p-pick up these penguins

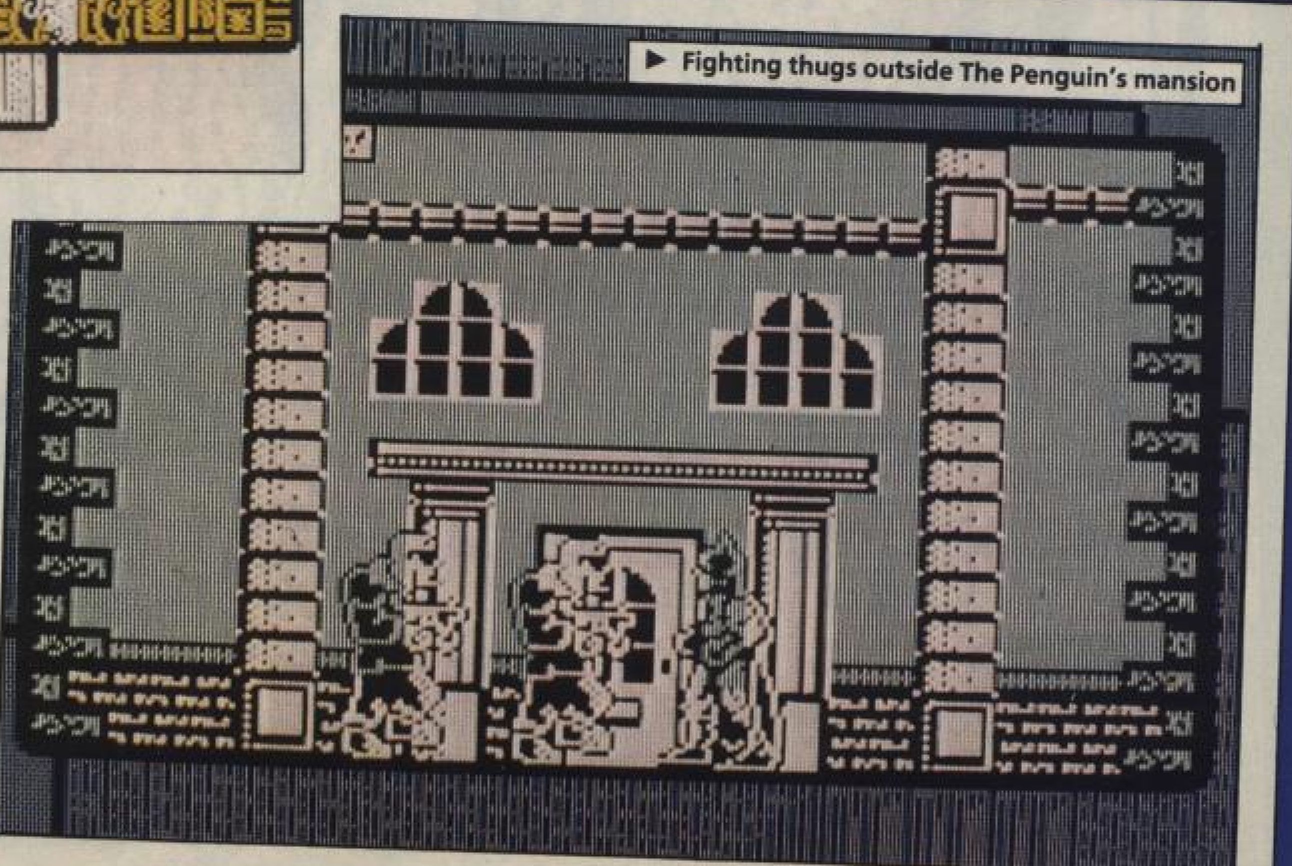


PUT IN TO BAT

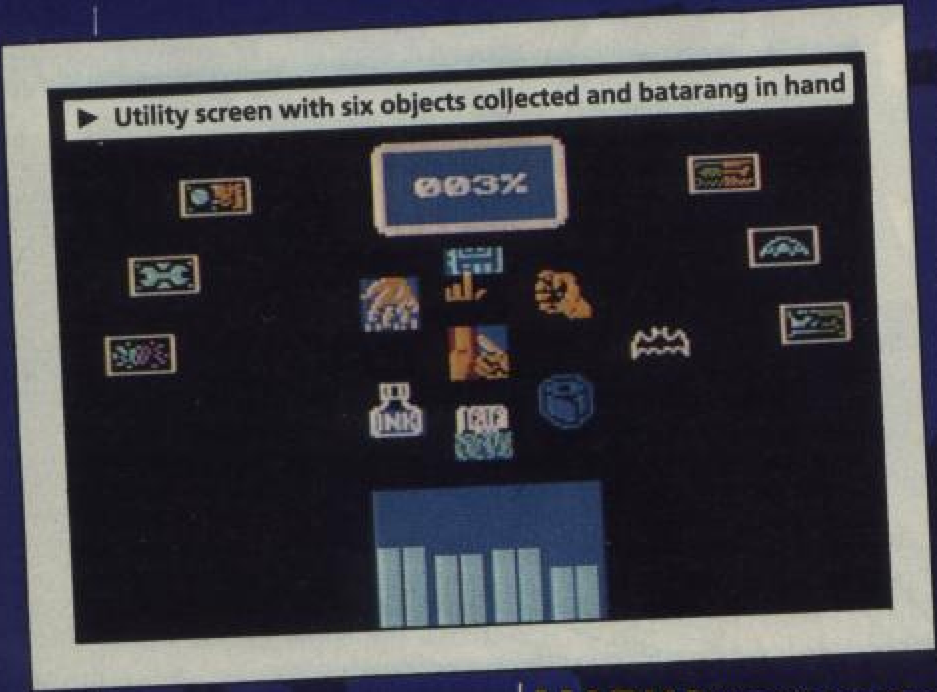
- Search the Batcave for useful objects before venturing outside.
- Use the Batarang to stun the henchmen.
- Save the red nose for emergencies (it makes you invisible).
- Read the captions which appear at some locations – they contain cryptic clues.
- Don't over eat: save food for when your energy is low.
- Experiment with various objects by trying to use them in different locations.

Not content with having a hit Smash game with the first *Batman*, Ocean have made another. And why not when it's as good as this? The game is set out in a comic book style with hints on what to do appearing in the corner of each screen, similar to the descriptions of places in comics. The graphics themselves are excellent, cartoon-style and full of detail, even down to the King Kong swinging on the Empire State Building in the background! The puzzles are not too difficult to fathom, with the little hints helping a great deal but not spoiling the game too much. Ocean have made a fantastic job on *Batman* and being in two parts you get excellent value for money. Brilliant!

NICK 93%



▶ Fighting thugs outside The Penguin's mansion



▶ Utility screen with six objects collected and batarang in hand

paper colour and even to choose between monochromatic graphics or glorious colour (although there's a small amount of clash). The key to success in either of Batman's crimebusting adventures is using objects at the right place. Useful items range from keys (for unlocking doors) to a red nose which is so silly that when Batman wears it he becomes perfectly disguised – for a while at least.

All the action takes place in true comic book style: each new location entered is overlaid on top of the previous ones, and as they are of varying sizes, this creates a sort of comic strip patchwork effect. Batman himself is animated in great detail, his cape flowing as he walks around an equally detailed play area (both outside and inside buildings). Colour is used well in the backgrounds, cleverly avoiding a lot of attribute clash, while creating an atmospheric environment for the fascinating gameplay.

Batman is not just technically impressive, but is also an immensely playable arcade adventure with a large playing area and plenty of devious puzzles to solve. In my opinion *Batman* has really captured the spirit of the comics and TV series making it an essential purchase. Whatever you do, don't miss it!

PHIL 93%

MARK Batman is one of my favourite comic book characters and it's great to see a game that is not only very playable, but also makes a serious attempt to do justice to the character. The Batman sprite is great, he really looks and moves just like the guardian of Gotham City. The baddies are a real pain in the behind, not to say face, chest and anywhere else they frequently manage to hit, but Batman can't be stopped. No his fight for truth and justice must go on, through 'game over' after 'game over'.

Some of the puzzles need real lateral thinking to solve, as do the uses for some of the collectable objects, like the toilet roll. One thing that requires little consideration is whether or not to buy this. Believe me this is brilliant and will appeal to both Batman fans and games-players generally.

92%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: superbly-animated sprites fight it out in an excellently-drawn 'comic strip' play area

Sound: a great 48K title tune and some neat, bashing spot effects, but no enhancements on the 128K machines

Options: definable keys. Two scenarios to play

General rating: a finely-honed arcade adventure which is surely the best comic licence ever – you'd be batty to miss it

Presentation	91%
Graphics	91%
Sound	88%
Playability	92%
Addictive qualities	91%

OVERALL 93%



▶ Looking for Batman's false teeth in the Batcave


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BARBARIAN II

● ***Do some hacking with your Spectrum***

Producer **Palace**
Sword price **£9.99 cass**
£14.99 disk
Author **Paul Atkinson**

Drax, like all the best baddies, has more lives than a cat. A year after his apparent demise in the original *Barbarian* (85%, Issue 41) he's returned to menace respectable, if only partially clad people again. Naturally, Barbarian sets out to finish his task, but after his mistake last time Princess Mariana has taken up arms herself. At the start of the game the player is given a choice of which of these two to control for the rest of the game.

Drax has gone to ground in the deepest depths of his monster-filled castle. This is made up of four multiloaded levels (one big load on the reverse side of the tape with music for the 128K). The first level is set just outside the castle, while the other three take the player inside. Each level has its own distinctive background graphics and superbly animated monsters. The latter range from leaping panthers and aggressive apes to dinosaurs which can bite your head off. Our hero and heroine are hardly wimps though, they've got a devastating range of combat moves including the notorious 'web of death' which beheads opponents.

Like Drax they've also more lives than average – five in fact! – plus an energy bar at the right of the screen. When they encounter an enemy, a bar appears on the left to show the creature's energy. Unlike the previous game simply killing opponents isn't enough, instead you've got to find two magical objects located somewhere in the smallish maze of locations on each level.

While colour isn't as used as cleverly as in the original, animation remains excellent and the increase in the number and type of opponents adds some particularly vicious new elements. Despite the arcade adventure format, the game's still essentially a beat-'em-up and tough enough that the multiload is more an occasion for celebration in reaching a new level than a drawback. My only reservation is that the game-type is a little old now and there's little dramatically new here.

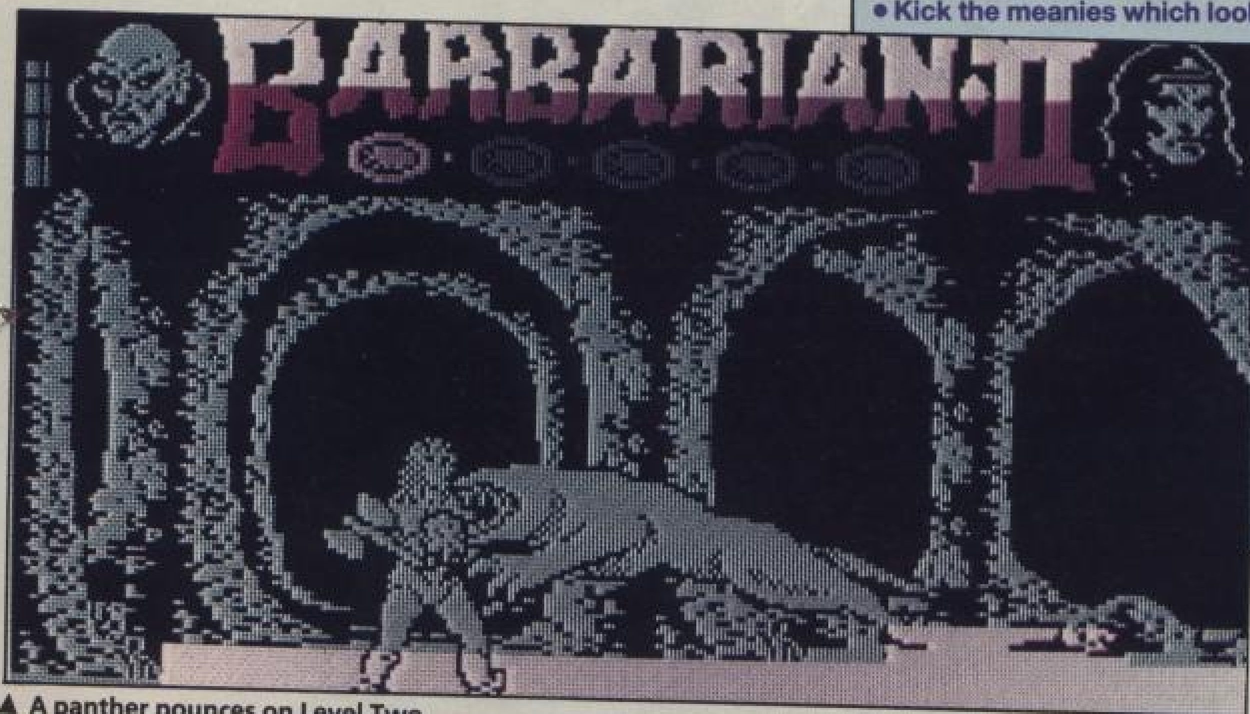
MARK 79%

GOING FOR A SLASH

- **If you keep a good rhythm going when beating up a nasty you can soon dispose of them.**
- **Keep well away from the big pits, it's easy to fall down them by accident!**
- **If the action in a particular screen is getting slightly hot, exit then re-enter – the monster will be back where it started but its energy won't have increased.**
- **Kick the meanies which look like Phil's hovering sheep!**

Barbarian II **seems to have taken the reviewers' comments on *Barbarian* and improved on the original to produce a great slice-and-dice game that all fans of the original will love. The main complaint with the first game was the lack of variety in the sprites. This has certainly been put right here with a huge range of tough new enemies. A pleasing follow-up to one of the best beat-'em-ups of 1987, maybe this is the best of 1988?**

NICK 83%



▲ A panther pounces on Level Two



▲ Watch the blood flow in another violent slash-'em-up

PHIL **Now here's a sequel that stands out on its own merits. The original *Barbarian* was great hacking fun but underneath all the gore was basically just a beat-'em-up with swords. Conversely, *Barbarian II* puts the emphasis on arcade adventure. Combat with a variety of weird, well-animated monsters is fun but mapping's essential to success. *Barbarian II* is an interesting hybrid of beat-'em-up and arcade adventure which is challenging enough to hold your interest for a long time, even though the combat eventually proves a bit repetitive.**

80%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the large sprites are well-animated, although sometimes difficult to distinguish on the monochromatic background
Sound: 128K tune, hitting effects
Options: play either the barbarian or the princess
General rating: an epic sequel which is really more of an arcade adventure than a beat-'em-up

Presentation	80%
Graphics	83%
Sound	38%
Playability	79%
Addictive qualities	77%

OVERALL 81%

LET THE VIDEO

VIDEOS GALORE THANKS TO DOMARK
(CHEERS, LADS!)



RETURN OF THE JEDI

is the third and final (till Mr Lucas decides to produce another film, or Atari/Tengen produce another coin-op!) game of the *Star Wars* coin-op series converted by Domark. **It certainly ends the spectacular battle between Luke and his malevolent father (whose name I can't reveal). The game is made up of two stages. Firstly, zooming along on a speeder bike, at incredibly high speeds, through the forests of Endor while pursued by other speeder bikes. Secondly, there's zooming along at even higher speeds in the Millenium Falcon, speeding through the new Imperial Death Star whilst chased by TIE fighters. Having played a preview version I can tell you it's all very hard, especially the impressive first section, but great fun too – I felt just like Wicket at times.**

Return Of The Jedi* should be appearing in the shops around about now, so the daring duo at Domark, namely Mark Strachan and Dominic Wheatley, have asked me to run a comp to celebrate its launch.** First prize **is a** VHS video recorder **and the complete** *Star Wars* video trilogy (Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back*** and ***Return Of The Jedi***). **In addition,** six runners-up **will receive** a Domark goody bag **(a convenient way of saying, 'I can't quite think of a runners-up prize at the moment, Compy'!). To have a chance of winning one of these top quality prizes just tell us** the names of Luke Skywalker's father, sister and foster parents (**we'll leave his second cousin for the next comp). As always Darth Vader's word is final, and any entries reaching us after the January 27 will earn their senders a visit from the Imperial Stormtroopers. Send your answers to** ANOTHER FORCEFUL COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.


BE WITH YOU
CRASH
COMPETITION

AIRBORNE RANGER

● *Invade countries even smaller than Grenada!*

Producer	**MicroProse**
Green berets	**£9.95 cass**
	£14.95 disk
Author	**Canvas**

You're one of the elite, a member of the US Army's Airborne Rangers, last in action spearheading the invasion of Grenada. Each and every Ranger is expected to have the diplomatic skills of Sylvestor Stallone, the muscles of Woody Allen and Dan Quayle's combat experience – or something like that. Naturally you're the best of the elite and the automatic choice for 12 dramatic missions pitting just one Ranger against enemy battalions.



The scenario and overhead view may suggest just another *Commando*-type shoot-'em-up but open the attractive box and you're faced with a 34-page instruction manual. About half of it is a history of the Rangers, but the rest is crammed with game details.

There are, for example, three different terrain types; temperate (like Central Europe), desert (heat increases fatigue) and Arctic (lakes are covered with *thin* ice). Missions range from simply destroying a munitions depot and photographing secret aircraft to freeing hostages. Extra points are given for the amount of damage inflicted, but on several missions stealth is essential. Each mission has a rigid time limit, after which the aircraft sent to pick you up leaves for home. To get to the pick-up point you can walk (restoring lost energy), crawl (especially in ditches to avoid being seen) or run (draining energy). Modes are switched between by keys and there's a useful keyboard overlay. Also selected by keys are weapons including a rifle, hand grenade, LAW rocket and time bombs. A cursor, fixed at the point the ranger is facing, helps aim these. If you're hit yourself, a first aid kit can remove one injury – take three untreated hits and you're dead. Extra ammunition, and first aid kits, can be picked up by supply canisters you drop over the combat zone at the start of the game.

This is, potentially, an excellent game with a first-class mix of strategy and arcade action. Unfortunately *every* time you die you must reload the mission you're on. When you're just getting started this is exceptionally irritating, especially as the multiload is otherwise excellent, clearly showing what's either loading or passing by. Once you become better at the game, and can survive longer, the problem is obviously reduced. In fact, the easier missions can soon be completed with a bit of patience and planning. (There is an option to increase their difficulty.) Successive missions then build up a cumulative high score until you lose your life. Graphics, by *RoboCop*'s Dawn Drake, are generally good and scrolling is fairly smooth – sound is minimal however. An innovative and original game this is well worth considering.

STUART 84%

MARK My first few attempts at *Airborne Ranger* were rapidly terminated by either enemy troops, gun turrets or landmines. But once I'd learned stealth with a knife gets you further than blasting everything in sight, I finally found some success. After that, trying to complete the other missions was quite compelling. Presentation is effective, with some nice monochrome graphics. Although my first feelings towards *Airborne Ranger* were ones of frustration, a bit of time and effort does pay off. A game which needs careful thought as well as great firepower is revealed.

82%



▲ Rushing a machine gun nest on yet another special mission

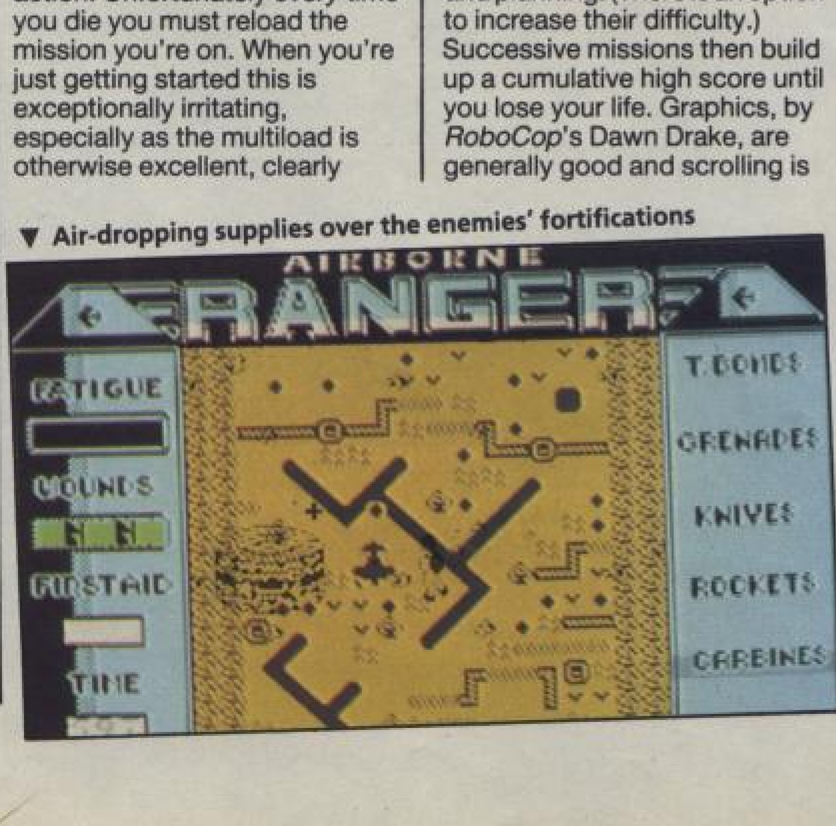
LOST IN THE FOREST?

- **Drop your supplies over the areas where you're likely to need them.**
- **Stay in the trenches as much as possible.**
- **Remember supplies weigh you down, increasing fatigue.**
- **Use rockets to destroy large enemy installations even when they're off screen.**

Mmm . . . an interesting twist on the *Commando* theme. The multiload is, of course, simply inexcusable but the rest of the game is quite good; killing the enemy and ducking into a nearby trench is mildly addictive. A good game for a while but not up to the usual MicroProse standards.

NICK 80%

▼ Air-dropping supplies over the enemies' fortifications



THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: well-drawn sprites and fairly-detailed monochrome landscapes
Sound: quiet, informative effects
Options: definable keys. Choice of mission and difficulty
General rating: a very competent and unusual simulation which has long-lasting appeal

Presentation	78%
Graphics	77%
Sound	45%
Playability	82%
Addictive qualities	83%
OVERALL	**82%**



THE PROTOTYPE HAD JUST ONE FEATURE TOO MANY.



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Producer **Domark**
Precious objects **£14.95 cass £19.95 disk**
Author **Oxford Digital Enterprises**

TRIVIAL PURSUIT
A NEW BEGINNING

Taking *Trivial Pursuit* into space for yet another sequel seems a rather desperate measure, but there are loads of new questions and the gameplay's been tweaked. The game begins on Earth, sometime in the future, when the dreaded 'greenhouse effect' has poisoned the atmosphere. Your mission is to search out the only other known planet that can support human life – Genus 2. Of course there's a hitch, the Elders of the planet will only allow humans on the planet if they collect six objects, won by answering trivial questions.

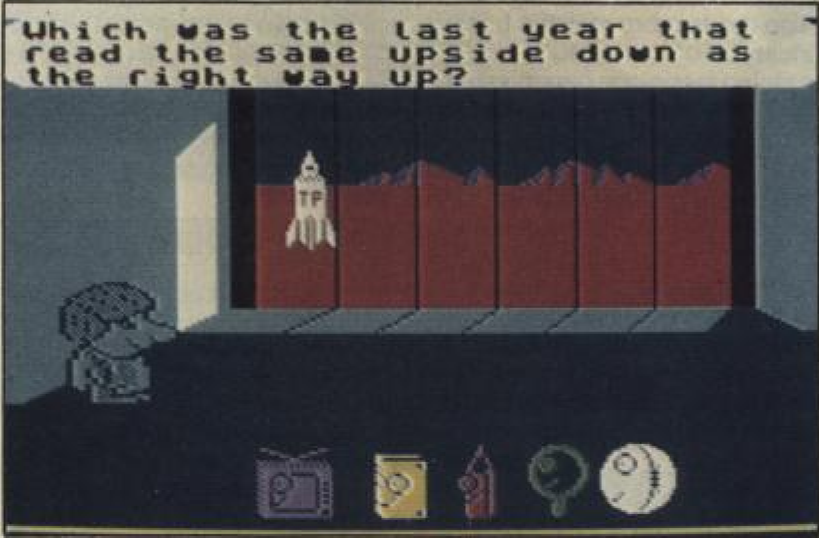
You start the game by being asked to select the number of players (up to six) and set the question timer. Characters, or pieces, are allocated and then the questions begin! If successful you're allowed to board your laser-powered rocket to race around space for those vital objects.

There are six categories of questions, Entertainment; History; Science and Nature; Sport and Leisure; Art and Literature, and Geography. In addition there's six galaxies, each with fifty planets and one object. Unlike the original there's no dice effect and players can choose to land on any of the fifty planets of their level. Questions are random and their type **doesn't** vary according to the planet's colour. Players take it in turn to test their skill and keep moving until they get a question wrong. Questions must be answered verbally in the presence of friends, and when the answer's displayed you're asked to honestly input if you were right or not. If you find an object and answer the question correctly you're automatically warped to the next galaxy. Once all six objects are found it's on to Genus to stand the final test.

For all the futuristic glitz this is actually quite a simple game and easy to pick up. As with *Trivial Pursuit* (91%, Issue 33) it's best played with a few friends since it's so easy – and tempting – to cheat. On the plus side, 15 blocks of multiload questions offers a huge challenge and lastability. While I don't usually like trivia games I enjoyed this one and recommend it for the long holidays.

MARK 86%

● *Let's get quizzical – and no cheating!*



▲ Well that's an easy question, isn't it?

NICK The fun thing about the *Trivial Pursuit* series of games is the excellent way the questions are presented to you. *A New Beginning* has cute aliens that walk on screen to ask you things, and the six players all get their own little animated sprite. Similarly, the backgrounds are all detailed and generously coloured. The questions range from easy ones that even I could answer to real puzzlers that had Lloyd in a tizzy. So whatever your abilities, there are questions for you. And as well as the normal text questions you get graphics and sound questions. This is a great follow-up, even if it is a little expensive.
83%

▼ CRASH's banana obsession returns



BRAIN OF BRITAIN

- Read loads of encyclopedias.
- If your opponent (in the same galaxy) has just got a question wrong on an object planet rush there to get it yourself.
- If your opponent reaches the final, winning question, choose his/her worst category for it.
- If your opponent is always winning, distract him by turning the computer off!

OK, you could say that this is just a remixed version of the previous *Trivial Pursuit*, but I think it's an improvement. In the previous version it was too easy to get questions on your favourite subject, but in the 'remix' you can't really do this, and unless you're Fred Housego you're bound to get some wrong. So gather family and friends round the log fire and instead of watching *Terry And June*, learn some interesting facts with this fascinating quiz game.

PHIL 81%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: weird talking aliens ask the questions on a variety of colourful backdrops
Sound: squeaky effects and some beepy tunes, essential for some music questions
Options: definable. Up to six players
General rating: one of the best quiz games around which contains plenty of questions for long-lasting appeal

Presentation	80%
Graphics	78%
Sound	65%
Playability	83%
Addictive qualities	81%

OVERALL 83%

Reviews

Producer **Code Masters Gold**
Football boots **£ 8.99 cass**
Author **Peter Williamson, animation by Sean Conran, music by David Whittaker**

4 SOCCER SIMULATORS

● ***A quadruple quantity of footy fun***

Code Masters' first full-price game is actually a package of four games. As well as the typical 11-a-side game, there's also street soccer, indoor 5-a-side soccer and soccer skills.

The first three involve playing a match in various surroundings. Each scrolling pitch is viewed from overhead, but at a slight angle for a pseudo 3-D effect. One player is controlled and if in possession of the ball, dribbling is automatic. Control of a player can either be manual (by moving a marker over the desired player) or automatic (the computer selecting the player nearest the ball – although by pressing fire, it changes to the next nearest).

Unlike *Match Day II*, there's no 'kickometer'. Instead, the strength of kick is determined by the direction and speed of the player. Movement of players is also made more realistic by the inclusion of momentum, so if running fast in one direction they take time slowing down before turning.

Another unusual (but realistic) feature is the ability to foul players by tackling them from behind Wimbledon-style. Luckily, in both the 11-a-side and indoor games, a trusty referee is on hand to award free kicks and penalties. But in street soccer, fouls result in arguments between the teams, portrayed by speech bubbles! Another unique feature of street soccer is the makeshift pitch, namely the middle of the high street! Obstacles such as walls and even a car, can be used to bounce the ball off – this version also brings a new meaning to the phrase 'fouling on the pavement'!

Another novel feature is that up to four players can play simultaneously, two per side (three can also play: two on one team against another single player). And if you don't think you're fit for the match, you can do some hard training in the soccer skills game. Events include dribbling around cones, penalty-taking and goalkeeping. You can also lift weights and do various other exercises in a race against the clock.

All in all, although matchplay isn't quite as fluent or varied as in *Match Day II*, four games in one represents very good value for money – and what other footy sim offers four-player action?

PHIL 80%

MARK **I'm not a great one for footy games, in fact I hate them but this isn't too bad. The porky footballers thunder around the pitch very well, and certainly put the boot in. But if you get bored with the footballing action you can test your fitness in the gym with a grueling training session. Not a brilliant game perhaps, but certainly well-programmed and bound to appeal to football hooligans everywhere – see Phil's comment.**

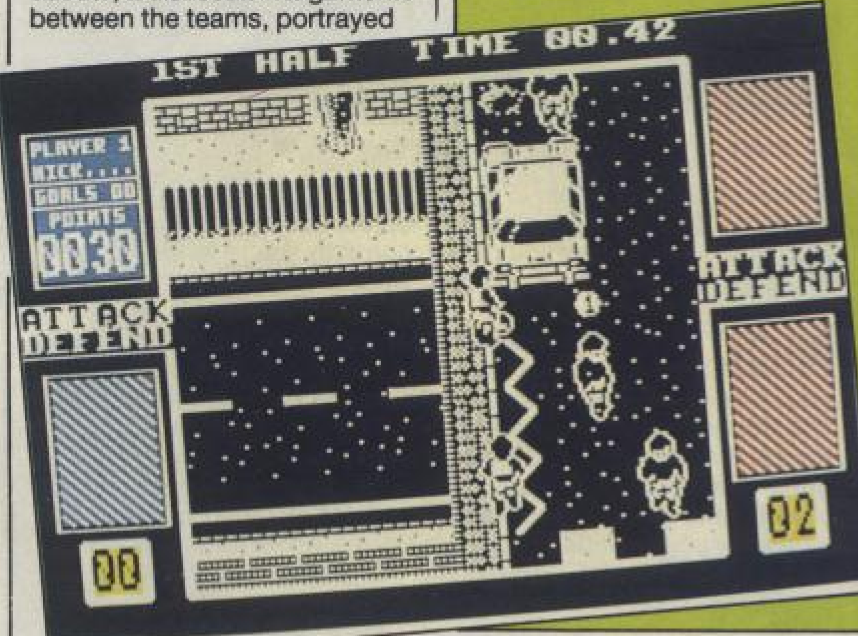
60%

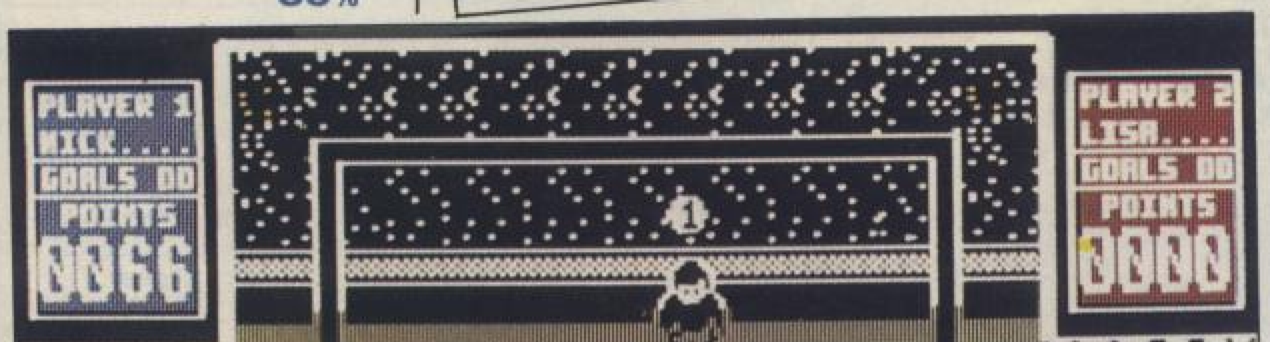
IF IN DOUBT . . .

- **. . . kick it out. Unless, in indoor or street soccer, when you should bounce the ball off the barrier/fences to confuse the opposition.**
- **If you're winning, play defensive to preserve your lead.**
- **Try playing with manual/automatic selection to see which you prefer.**
- **Don't ask Bobby Robson for any advice!**

The first in Code Masters' new series kicks it off to a good start. All four games are excellently implemented with detailed, monochrome sprites and backgrounds, plus the odd splotch of colour between games. There's the usual Code Masters jolly music and plenty of sound effects. What I liked best, though, was how the kids argued after a foul in Street Football with comic-strip expletives deleted. A worthy alternative to *Match Day II.*

NICK 84%





THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: smoothly scrolling pitch, with four very distinct sections
Sound: an assortment of suitable tunes, effects and the essential ref's whistle
Options: manual/auto player selection. Up to four players can compete simultaneously
General rating: with essentially four games in one, this is excellent value for money

Presentation	77%
Graphics	79%
Sound	75%
Playability	75%
Addictive qualities	73%
OVERALL	**75%**

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GREMLIN
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Producer **Grandslam**
Secret settlement **£8.95 cass**
£14.95 disk
Author **Source**

Would-be master-spies draw the blinds, turn up the radio and pay attention. *Espionage* has arrived on the Spectrum and it's ideal training for sending Bond, Smiley and Co on special missions. The objective is to get some vital microfilm back to base. One to four people can take part, with the computer filling any suspiciously empty seats.

The game board is a grid, with black, impassable squares. In the board's centre are four microfilm canisters, which can be obtained by Couriers (each player has six) and Secret Agents (four each). Each player also has two Surveillance Agents. Couriers move diagonally, Surveillance Agents move parallel to the board lines, while Secret Agents are able to move in either of these two modes. During a turn a player can move their selected agent any number of spaces in a forward direction, but obviously can't make turns or anything like that. Killing an enemy agent is done by moving your agent over him by one space – if the agent's back is against wall then he can't be killed.

At the start of the game there's a special period called 'detente' where players take turns to distribute their agents around the board. Agents can be put anywhere, and cannot be taken. Once this stage finishes it's a race to get the most microfilms home, fastest, while bumping off as many enemies as possible. Money is awarded for microfilms and assassinations and the game finishes when all the microfilms are at a home base. If a courier is taken while carrying the microfilm the 'assassin' gets the film, whatever type of agent he is. To avoid this you should Exchange your microfilm-carrying agent with someone at home base. Any two of your agents can be exchanged at any time.

The computer game presents only a section of the board, but it's over half of the board and can be easily scrolled to show other parts. There are eight options; Zoom (close-up view of board), Pause, Hint (computer suggests move), Quit, Help (text reminding you of game objectives), Computer Makes Your Move, Last Move (shows what this was) and Sound On/Off.



▲ Spy-fi chess for wannabe Peter Wrights everywhere

ESPIONAGE!

● *Editor, Writer, Tipster, Spy*

First impressions of the rulebook are daunting, but it all becomes obvious enough while in play. Definitely the best way to play is with a couple of friends – preferably as inexperienced at the game as you – but if you want, the computer can offer some tough opposition. *Espionage* is a good strategy game that is fun to play for everyone.

MARK 81%

STUART Having played the board game I found the computer version something of an improvement, with the overhead plan view easier to make sense of. Also the computer opponent is both fairly fast and intelligent. Gameplay is good, but the crucial detente stage is a bit dull while the Exchange option can make things a little easy. While certainly nothing to compare with the classic simplicity/complexity of chess this is a novel and involving game.

81%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: tiny pieces move around a scrolling board, while the Zoom option magnifies a certain area
Sound: a catchy, Bond-sounding title tune, but merely informative beeps during play
Options: any combination of four computer/human players can compete. Play to time or finish. Change time limit for each move
General rating: a very good conversion of the intriguing board game, especially interesting with more human players

USING YOUR INTELLIGENCE

- **During detente put at least one of your couriers near the centre, ready to take the microfilm.**
- **Try to position most pieces near walls, to make them harder to take.**
- **Take one piece back to base, so that when you get the microfilm, you can simply exchange the two pieces for an immediate safe return to base.**
- **Don't play against clever-clogs Stuart!**

This is great fun, especially with lots of human opposition. The whole game revolves around simple chess- and draughts-like moves and is therefore very easy to learn. However, the 'sting in the tail' is the way that any two pieces may be exchanged, altering the whole strategic picture in a single turn. *Espionage* is a very competent strategy game which is easy to get into and hard to stop playing – now how can I get that microfilm back to base?

PHIL 82%

Presentation	81%
Graphics	74%
Sound	65%
Playability	82%
Addictive qualities	79%

OVERALL 81%

EXPLODING FIST +

● ***Yet more karate capers***

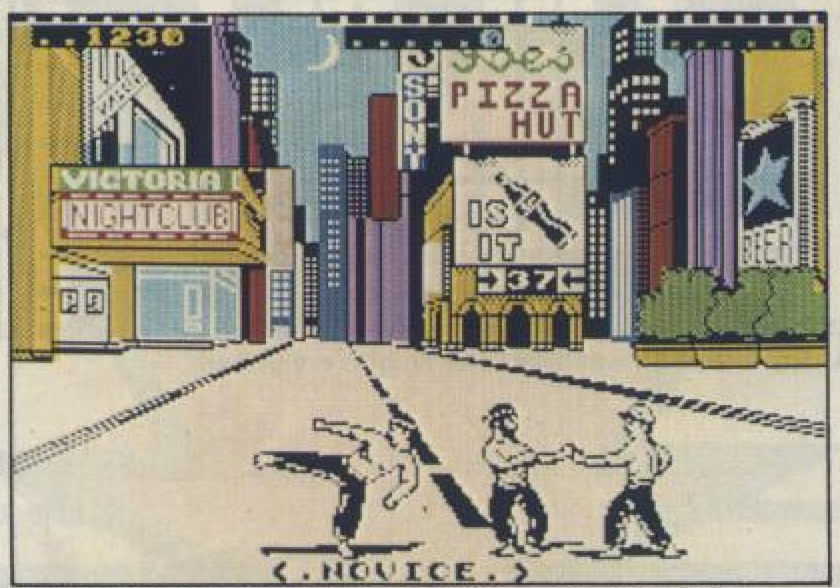
Producer **Firebird**
Bandages and ointment **£7.99 cass**
Author **Beam Software**

After the original *Way Of The Exploding Fist* kicked off a whole new genre of games we now have the third, with the appropriate innovation of adding a third player.

Once the game starts you have sixty seconds to beat the living daylights out of your computer or human opponents. To do this you've a quite lethal array of moves, plus a cartwheel to get out of trouble. When a human player is knocked out of the bout, the computer takes over. But at the end of every two bouts the surviving players are sent onto a bonus screen. Here each player is individually faced with a derelict building and a cursor. As various monsters pop-up you must hit them with a shuriken star to stop them rushing you. There's 250 points for each hit and no penalty when you die.

Sad to say *Exploding Fist +* did little to impress me, while graphically okay, gameplay is very limited. Both the beat-'em-up and shu·iken star screens prove repe.itive quickly. In one-player mode the game is very simple, with the computer opponents tending to attack each other, leaving me to strike whilst they weren't looking. If you've got two friends then things obviously improve, but only for a while and it's unlikely you'll return to it often.

MARK 61%



▲ **What do you have to do to get a take-away around here?**

PHIL **Well this is a bit of a surprise: after the brilliant *IK+*, I thought we'd seen the end of karate clones for a while. But no here's another, with the unique feature of a three-player option. Certainly it needs some novelty factor since like many of these games there's a bug where one repeated move can always defeat the computer players. Two- or three-player games are slightly more fun, but despite this, and the smooth animation, + is finally just another mediocre clone.**

58%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the fighters are fairly well animated, but there's only one backdrop for the combat
Sound: beepy, oriental title tune, but merely bashing spot effects during play
Options: up to three players can take part
General rating: even with the three-player option, it's nothing special

Presentation	61%
Graphics	65%
Sound	55%
Playability	54%
Addictive qualities	50%

OVERALL 54%

I GET A KICK OUT OF YOU

- **In the one-player game, go to the left hand side of the screen and kick the computer fighters as they approach you.**
- **Use the 'cartwheel' to avoid trouble.**
- **Try to sneak up behind your opponents and catch them by surprise.**
- **In the bonus round, always aim slightly above the heads which appear for a certain hit.**

Groan! Not another one! There's an oriental tune at the beginning and punching effects in the game to add a bit of spice, but so what? Similarly unexciting is the bonus section. Apart from the addition of the three-player option this seems time-warped out of another era – best forgotten.

NICK 42%

Producer **Imagine**
Price of bananas **£7.95 cass**
£14.95 disk
Author **Sentient**

Licensed from the Shin Nihon Kikaku Corp (or SNK for short) (and I can see why – Ed) this is the third in the *Ikari Warriors* trilogy. After the futuristic combat of the still unconverted *Victory Road* (also to be produced by Imagine) this game takes place in the present day. The location is a tropical island where the people are oppressed by an evil tyrant (and no, it isn't the UK). Aiming to liberate the country is a battle-hardened mercenary (plus friend in two player mode).

Of course, no sooner than you land on the island's beaches than a horde of government troops open fire. Moving surprisingly spritely for someone with 50 grenades in their back pocket, plus an infinite supply of bullets, you return fire. Be careful not to hit hostages though, that loses you 500 points, while walking over them earns 1000 points. Also to be watched out for are the various glowing special weapons, which can be collected, and tanks. Carelessly left with the key still in the ignition these can be commandeered for a while, but watch out for mines!

At the end of each of the five levels there's a special baddie,

Producer **Players**
A trivial amount **£1.99 cass**
Authors **Andy Severn and Colin Swinbourne**

This month sees two new releases trying to put a new twist on the basic, TV quiz format, with the budget release the most innovative.

The basic setup has a board with two to four opponents taking part, each with four warriors in their own corners. Initially all of a player's warriors are at level one (difficulty) except a single level two character. The computer then goes around the players in turn, asking them to select which warrior they want to move, then presenting a multiple-choice question of the category indicated by the square the warrior's on. (The four categories are general knowledge, sport and leisure, science and technology, and history and geography, each represented by a different shaded square.) If the question's answered correctly within the

GUERRILLA WAR

● *King Kong returns with machine gun!*

requiring appropriate tactics, to dispose of. Simply getting to the first of these is no easy task. Enemy troops are both numerous and heavily armed. Given this difficulty of play, unexciting presentation and unoriginal gameplay this is a distinctly average release.

MARK 58%

PHIL ***Ikari Warriors*** **wasn't too bad a game concept, so an improved sequel had to be good news, hadn't it? Well, sound's good, with nice explosions and some tuneful 128K music, but the graphics are poor, with a dull, monochromatic playing area. The real problem, though, is the dubious collision detection and the way you can get trapped behind a fence – forcing you to restart game. This is still a fairly playable game, but could have been much better.**

63%

JUNGLE JAUNTS

- **Memorise the patterns of enemy soldiers.**
- **Be careful not too shoot hostages if you want a high score.**
- **'Duck under' enemy grenades by getting too close to the throwers for them to hit you.**
- **Use the tank to get through really tough sections.**

The only baddies this game tempts me to lob a grenade at are the programmers. The green blocks that break up the monochrome play area look silly, the sound is only adequate and the toughness is infuriating. Avoid.

NICK 42%



▲ Don't get caught on those fences or you'll be there until Phil's sheep come home

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cheetah 125 Special, Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: wobbly sprites waddle around a distinctly blocky, play area
Sound: two decent 128K title tunes and adequate ingame explosive effects
Options: one or two players. Rotate or normal controls
General rating: an unoriginal shoot-'em-up which has been let down by sloppy programming

Presentation	55%
Graphics	53%
Sound	62%
Playability	54%
Addictive qualities	52%

OVERALL 54%

POWERPLAY

STUART All trivia games suffer from repetition of questions but *Powerplay* minimizes this by awarding wisdom points for very fast responses. *Powerplay*'s other innovation – chasing opponents around the board for combat is great, but once an opponent has just one warrior it's very hard to catch him. Another slight flaw is that players' pieces look the same, which can be confusing. Nevertheless this is a novel, and very playable trivia game.

83%



▲ Still struggling to get a question right, Cameron?

time limit the player gets to move the warrior one space. In either case the computer moves to the next player – avoiding the boring sessions when one player gets a string of answers right.

If a player answers very quickly, and correctly, wisdom points are awarded the warrior – collect 25 and an option is given to move on to a higher level. The higher the level the less chance of being killed, but the questions become harder too, so it's more difficult to move. But it's also possible to move around the board by standing on one of four teleport squares – step on one and you randomly appear on another, or even the same square.

The aim of the game is simply to wipe out all your opponents' warriors in challenges. These are begun by trying to move onto a square occupied by an enemy warrior. The winner of the challenge is the first person to select the right answer to the challenge question, or the person who did nothing when the other got it wrong. The loser's warrior is down-graded a level, or killed if at the lowest level.

Despite being entirely monochrome I really like the look of this game, especially when a character spins out of existence. Sound is nonexistent, and questions repeat themselves too often, but this is an entertaining trivia game at a great price.

MARK 80%

THE ESSENTIALS

JOYSTICKS Kempston, Sinclair
SOUND only a few beeps on the front-end
OPTIONS two to four players can compete. Four difficulty levels for time allowed to answer questions, and four question-loads

80% GRAPHICS Well-defined 3-D sprites with good, spinning transformation effects
83% PLAYABILITY Instantly playable and especially so with more players
77% ADDICTIVE QUALITIES It only starts to lose some appeal when the questions run out

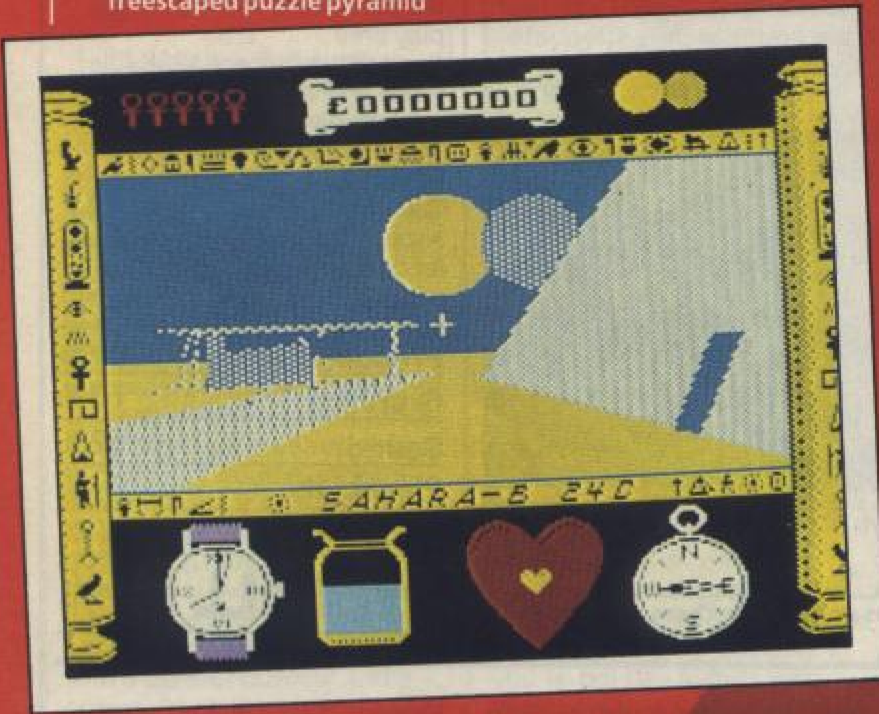
OVERALL 82%

● *Eat your heart out Indiana Jones*

Producer **Incentive**
Bucket and spade **£9.95 cass**
£14.95 disk
Author **Major Developments**

TOTAL ECLIPSE

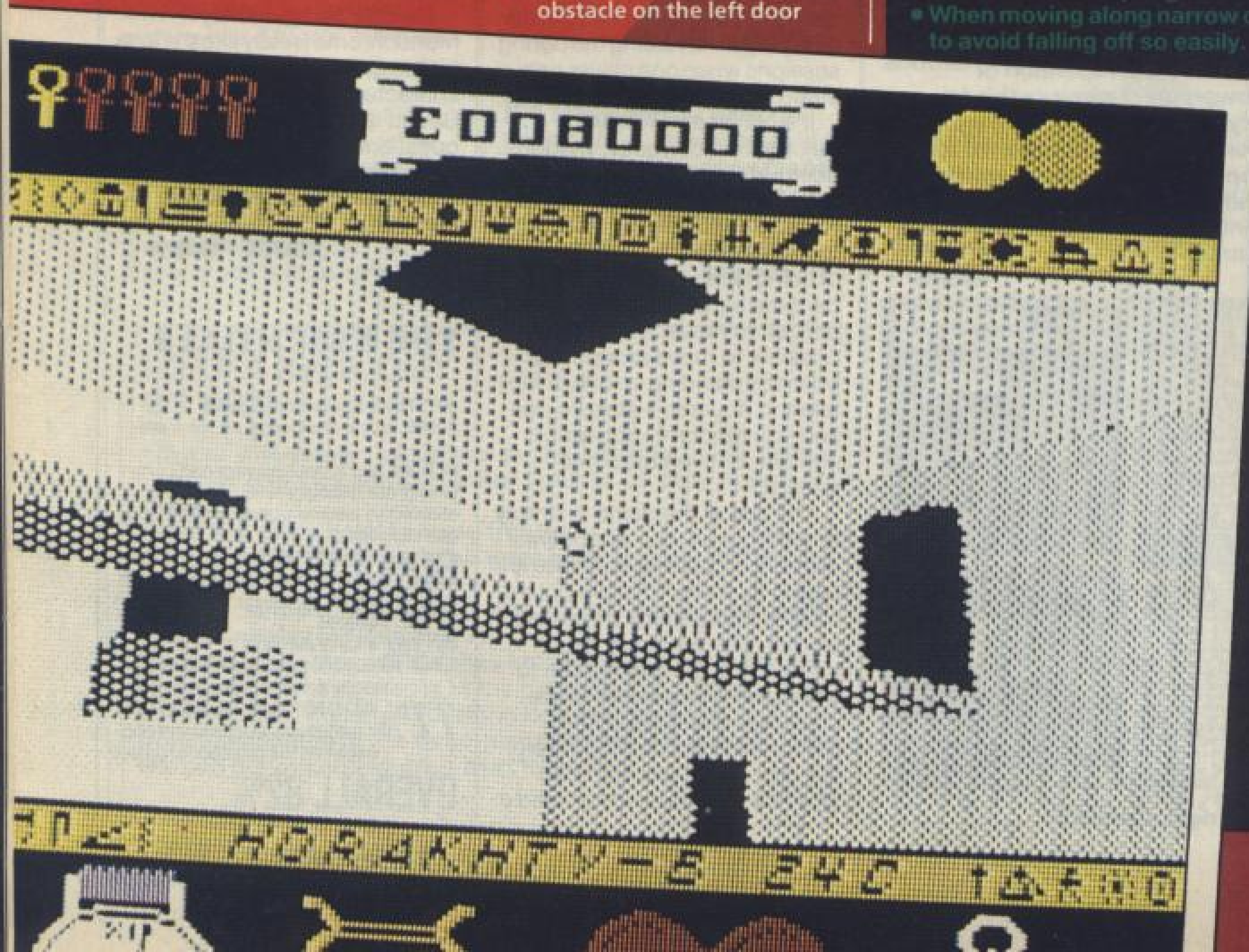
▼ The riddle of the Pharaohs – Incentive's fantastic freescaped puzzle pyramid



This is the picture – you are standing beside your 1930s biplane in the Sahara desert, overshadowed by one of the great pyramids. A firm believer in the occult you've been alarmed by learning of a curse laid on this place. The pyramid was built in ancient times with a special chamber at its Apex for the ancient Egyptian sun-god, Re. The sole reason for its construction was as a curse on the people who had revolted against the High Priest. And if anything should obscure the sun's rays during daylight hours the curse will be fulfilled and the Moon explode.

Now here's your problem: a total eclipse of the sun is due in just two hours time. Your

▼ Use the ankh to remove the obstacle on the left door

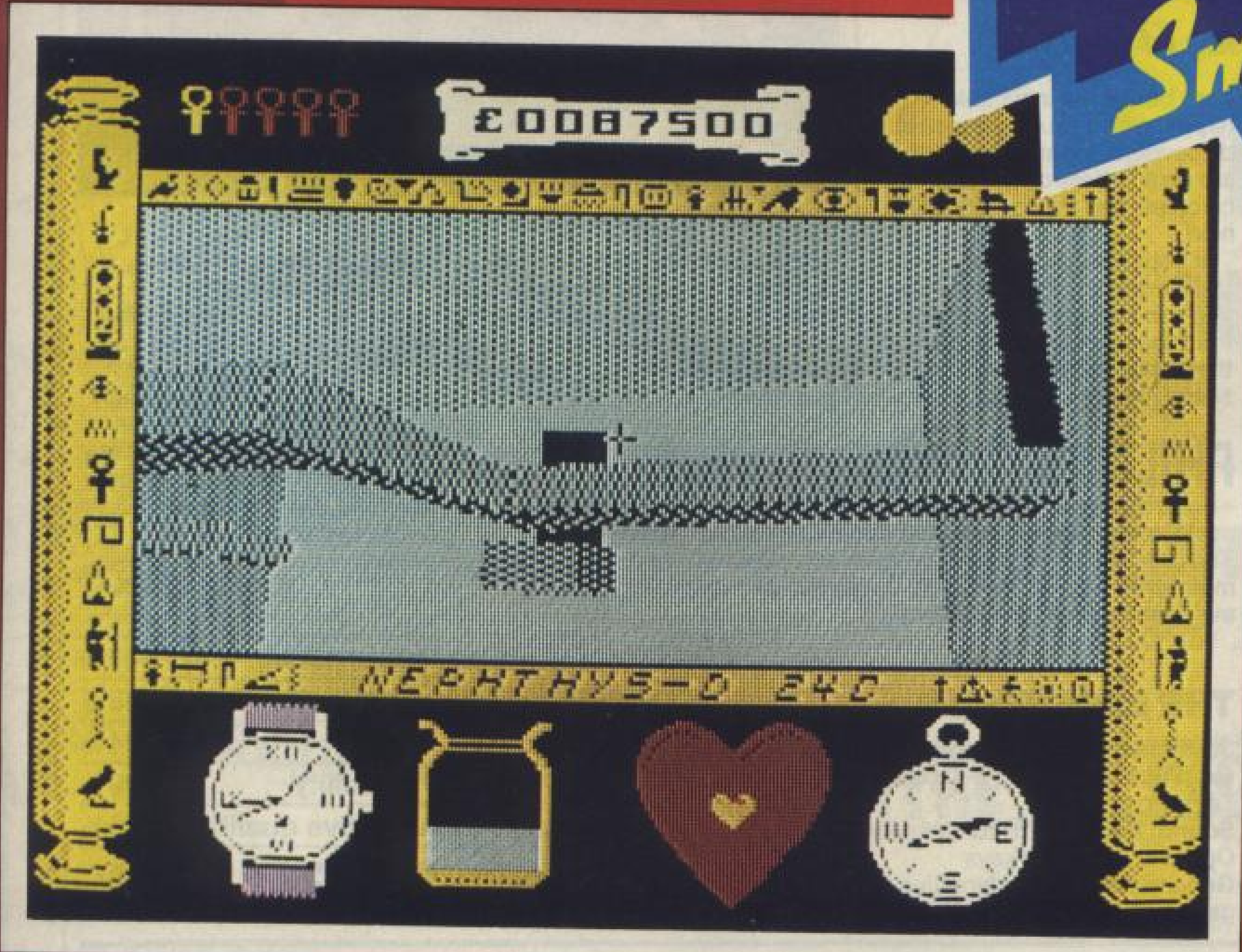


ANKHS FOR THE MEMORY (AND THE TIPS)

- Search all the nooks and crannies for Ankhs and treasure.
- Shoot at any symbols which appear on the walls – some of them open doors.
- Top up your water bottle whenever you get the chance: thirst is not good for your heart.
- Watch out for nasty mummies – shoot them to make them close their sarcophaguses.
- When moving along narrow catwalks, reduce your step size to avoid falling off so easily.
- Make a map of each floor level, and do some origami to make a 3-D model!

First there was *Driller*, then came *Dark Side*, and now *Total Eclipse* is set to blow the socks off of the games-playing fraternity. And being an Incentive game the Freescape technique is as stunning as ever. I must say that I was slightly surprised that the futuristic scenario present in the last two games has been changed to an *Indiana Jones*-type adventure. The same devious puzzles and traps survive, though, and the old grey matter is given some tricky situations to sort out. But then CRASH readers are a brainy bunch so you shouldn't have too much trouble. *Total Eclipse* is a brilliant game which gives Incentive a hat trick of successes, well done guys.

MARK 95%





▼ No more moonlight serenades now!

thankless task is to find Re's shrine and destroy it before the eclipse brings about a catastrophic disaster. Your equipment for this task is about the best the 1930s could provide: a revolver, wrist watch, compass, and water bottle, which can be topped up from water troughs found inside the pyramid.

The many rooms of the pyramid (all portrayed in glorious Freescape) contain many objects, including chests of treasure, jewels and Ankhs – special symbols which can be used to open the barriers on some of the doors. Stairways allow access to higher levels of the pyramid, but the route to the shrine is a tortuous one which can only be completed by solving a variety of mysterious puzzles.

Time may be your worst enemy in this quest, but is not your only one: poisoned dart booby-traps can prove fatal, while falling off high ledges isn't too healthy either. Your health is shown by a heart, the faster it beats the nearer a fatal heart attack. If you want you can slow it down by resting, a special function which speeds up time until your health's restored.

The Freescape technique was impressive in *Driller* and *Dark Side*, but *Total Eclipse* uses it to its full potential, creating a sinister, claustrophobic atmosphere to suit the Egyptian scenario. The pyramid is full of nasty surprises and mysteries that will take a long time to discover. In fact I think *Total Eclipse* is probably the best Freescape game yet, with much more attention paid to deep game content. This is one that should keep you playing until you complete it.
PHIL 92%

NICK The only way is up, and to get there you have a colossal but thoroughly enjoyable task in this new Incentive Freescape game. As you should all know by now, the Freescape technique makes for fantastic gameplay and whatever idea Incentive put into one of these games, it's bound to be a hit. *Total Eclipse* is no exception, the idea of exploring a pyramid to find the shrine of the sun-god Re has great potential, and with a time limit of two hours the excitement and addictiveness soon mounts. Once you have a basic understanding of what all the weird hieroglyphics mean, and what function they perform, you can begin to get somewhere in the game. Fortunately, you can always save your position (to tape or disk) and continue when you feel like it (and it will take more than one go to complete). *Total Eclipse* is bigger than its predecessors but, in my opinion, doesn't beat the playability of *Dark Side*. Still, there's plenty more Freescape action to get stuck into with *Total Eclipse* and it should keep you occupied for quite a while. Incentive have done it again!
93%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the Freescape solid 3-D is just as impressive as ever, but seems slightly faster (5-10%) than in its predecessors
Sound: no tunes, but some good, informative effects
General rating: the third Freescape game takes a new theme and is – probably – the most playable so far



Presentation	90%
Graphics	93%
Sound	58%
Playability	93%
Addictive qualities	92%

OVERALL 93%



▶ The ultimate war machine lurches toward your DSV

TERRORPODS

● *Three legs for the price of two!*

Producer	Psygnosis/Melbourne House
Spare legs	£9.99 cass
Author	Ian Hetherington, Colin Rushby

Colian may well be one of the bleakest places in the universe, but it's blessed with plentiful deposits of Detonite (a powerful explosive), Quaza (a power crystal) and Aluma (the hardest metal known to man). Six mining colonies were built to exploit these treasures, but soon attracted the attention of an Empire Mother Ship. But rather than simply destroying the colonies it enslaved them. In short, they were turned to producing the most deadly land-based weapon ever – the Terrorpod. Machines by which the Empire planned to conquer the galaxy.

Somewhat concerned about this, the Federation sent their best spy to snoop around. Comfortably strapped into your Defence Strategy Vehicle (DSV) you begin your mission, months pass before the inevitable happens and your presence is discovered. Eight Terrorpods are sent to destroy the six colonies, and the secrets they hold.

If you manage to destroy all the Terrorpods at a colony then you can collect a component from the manufacturing plant, then warp to the next colony in search of more secrets. There are six components needed to complete the game. Naturally the Mother Ship isn't pleased by your efforts and periodically despatches missiles to zoom over the horizon at you.

PHIL ***Terrorpods* is an ambitious idea, poorly implemented. The game is so difficult as to be impossible to get into – control of your vehicle is extremely awkward, while limited fuel and endless enemy missiles soon kill you off. Technically, *Terrorpods* isn't too bad, with an effective 3-D landscape. The main drawback is the badly designed gameplay and awkwardness of the controls.**

26%

Despite greatly enjoying Psygnosis's last game, *Barbarian*, I was disappointed with this one. The graphics are simplistic and drab, while control of the DSV is irritatingly tricky. After playing for some time I found little evidence of any gameplay to make these faults bearable – which is a pity because the scenario and packaging is first class.

MARK 35%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: fairly good 3-D parallax effect, but drab, monochromatic Terrorpods
Sound: the usual mixture of sparse spot effects, but no title tune
Options: definable keys
General rating: an interesting idea has been turned into an awful game

Presentation	40%
Graphics	38%
Sound	24%
Playability	29%
Addictive qualities	26%

OVERALL 30%

BY FAIR MEANS OR FOUL

● *If you can't box clever, fight dirty!*

Producer	Superior Software
Fighter's purse	£7.95 cass, £12.95 disk
Author	C Goodwin from an original version by M and T Simpson

He was fighting dirty, know what I mean 'Arry? Well even professional boxers have been known to resort to the odd low punch and in this game the carefully-timed foul is just as important as a good right hook.

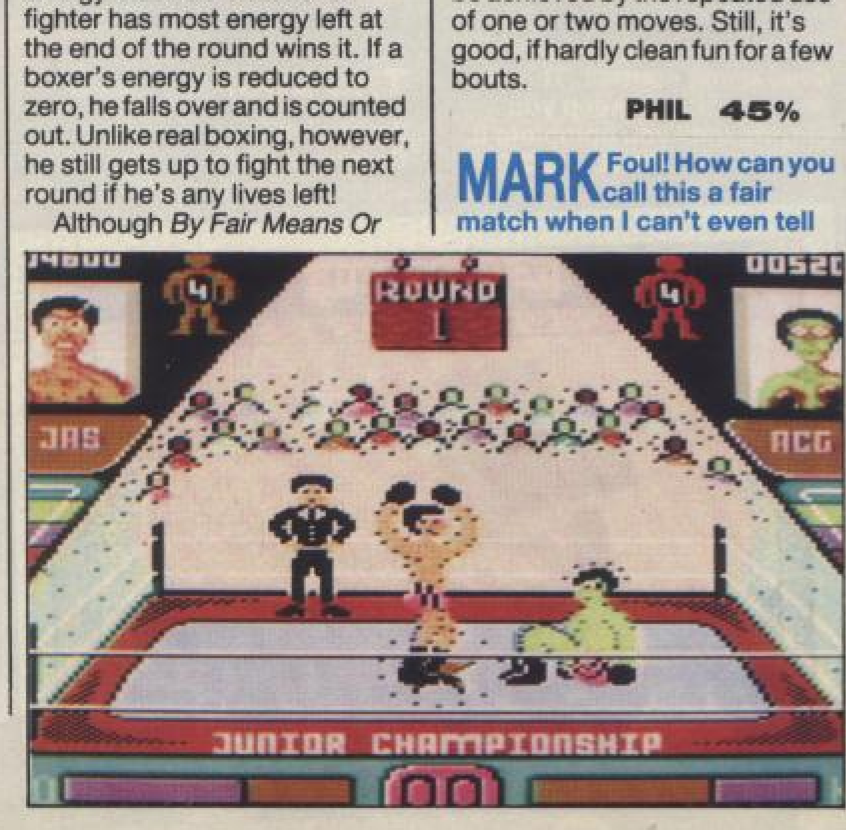
In two-player mode two 'friends' can fight each other, while the one-player game involves taking on progressively tougher opponents in a bid for the World Championship. Some of them, with names like Dirty Larry and Fast Freddy, aren't bad at fighting dirty either.

Bouts can last for a maximum 15 rounds, but more often than not one of the fighters fails to go the distance, losing all his five lives first. Lives are lost for losing a round and being spotted committing a foul move. The referee moves around the ring at random, watching out for fouls, but sometimes he nods off! Icons at the top of the screen turn red or green, according to which, if any, boxer he's keeping an eye on.

Selecting a dirty move is, like fair moves, by the usual combination of joystick directions and fire. Showing the impact of these moves are two energy bars and whichever fighter has most energy left at the end of the round wins it. If a boxer's energy is reduced to zero, he falls over and is counted out. Unlike real boxing, however, he still gets up to fight the next round if he's any lives left!

Although *By Fair Means Or Foul* appeals to my devious nature, technically it's mediocre with wobbly sprites and basic sound. The action ultimately gets repetitive, as success can be achieved by the repeated use of one or two moves. Still, it's good, if hardly clean fun for a few bouts.

PHIL 45%



MARK **Foul! How can you call this a fair match when I can't even tell which is my boxer? In any case, the pair of 'em look doped, moving around the ring like they're ice-skating. As for the ref, how much was he paid? – he never notices the other guy's fouls while mine are spotted every time! What a con!**

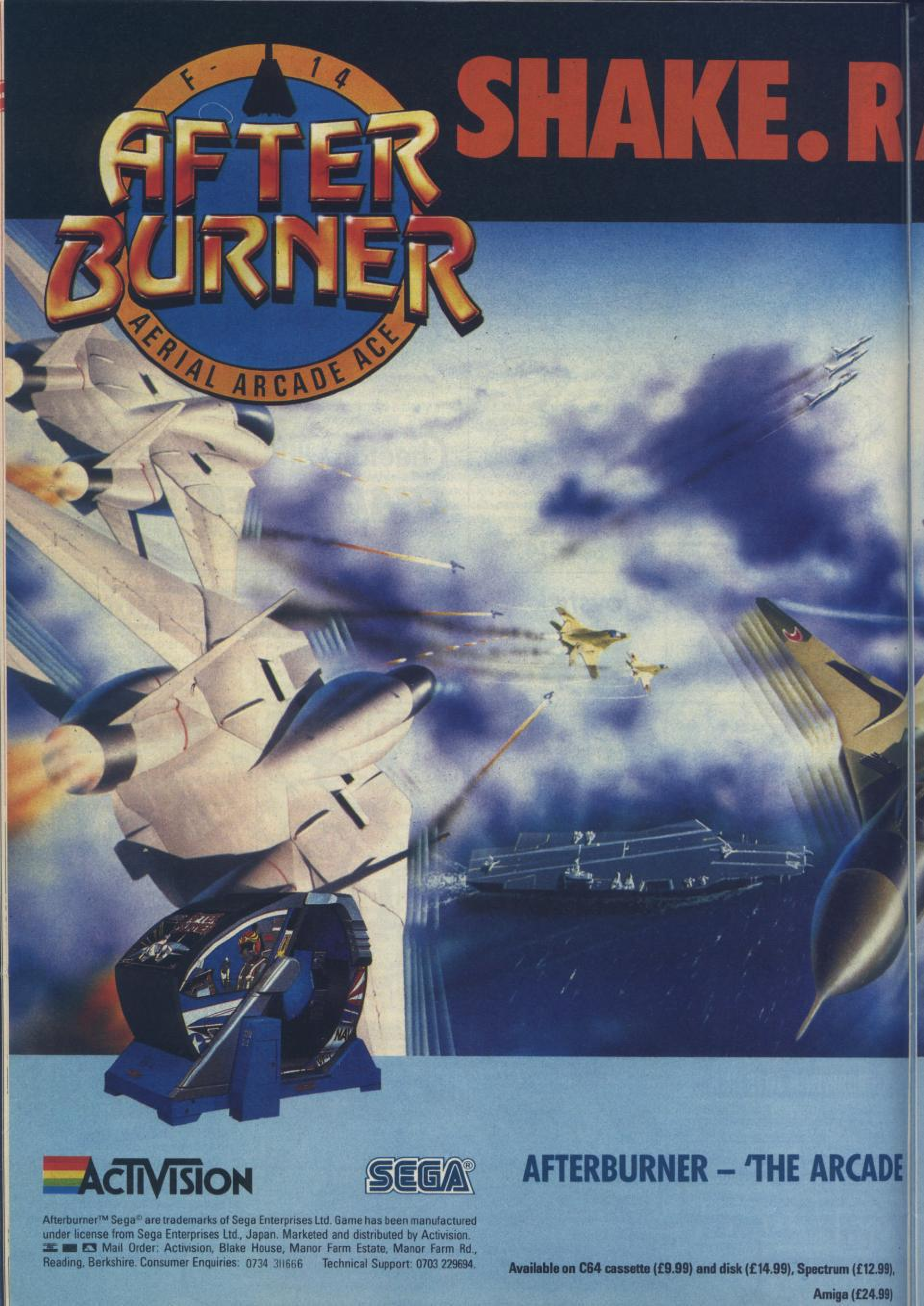
23%

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: sloppy boxer sprites 'skate' around the ring
Sound: simple punching noises and crunchy applause at the end of each round
Options: one or two players. Restart game against more difficult opponent
General rating: a great idea which has been let down by poor programming – it won't knock you out!

Presentation	40%
Graphics	32%
Sound	28%
Playability	37%
Addictive qualities	33%

OVERALL 34%



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ATTLE. ROLL IT. . .





Amiga screen shots shown



ST screen shots shown

SENSATION OF THE YEAR'

AFTERBURNER – You've played the arcade **smash** – now **experience** the white-knuckled **realism** of a supersonic **dogfight** at home! Using your heat-seeking **missiles** and laser anti-aircraft **fire**, can you be **top gun** against a seething supersonic **swarm?**

Experience brain-numbing **G-forces;** bones **rattling** with the body-jarring **pitch** and yaw . . . **scan** with your **radar**, **lock on** your target and **FIRE!**

Amstrad cassette (£9.99) and disk (£14.99), Atari ST (£24.99), and MSX (£9.99).

CECCO'S LOG

Stardate: 28 October 1988

From the kindness of Andrew ' . . . but you can call me God' Hewson's heart comes an offer I can't refuse – an all-expenses paid day out! I was in the Hewson offices with good old Nick 'Raf is only heavier than me because he's got a bigger brain' Jones when this wonderful news was broken. It's been left up to us to choose any destination we desire.

'How about the Caribbean?' Nick suggests.

After a bit of haggling we are whittled down to somewhere closer to home – a day trip to London (this will be really interesting and different, considering I was born there)!

Stardate: 1 November 1988

Progress on *Stormlord* is well under way now, after having to temporarily abandon it for *Cybernoid II*. The first batch of graphics from Hugh Binns has arrived. We have decided that both Hugh and I will design graphics for *Stormlord* and choose the best of the bunch.

Stardate: 4 November 1988

Hoorah!! It's free day out in London today, and as we all know, 'never look a gift horse in the gob' (after all, who in their right mind would pay to go to the grotty place?). In fact, I'm in such a good 'Londoney' mood today that I'm up at the crack of dawn singing 'my old man's a dustman' and shouting, '2 for a pand an' 4 for a Jimmy!', (whatever that means).

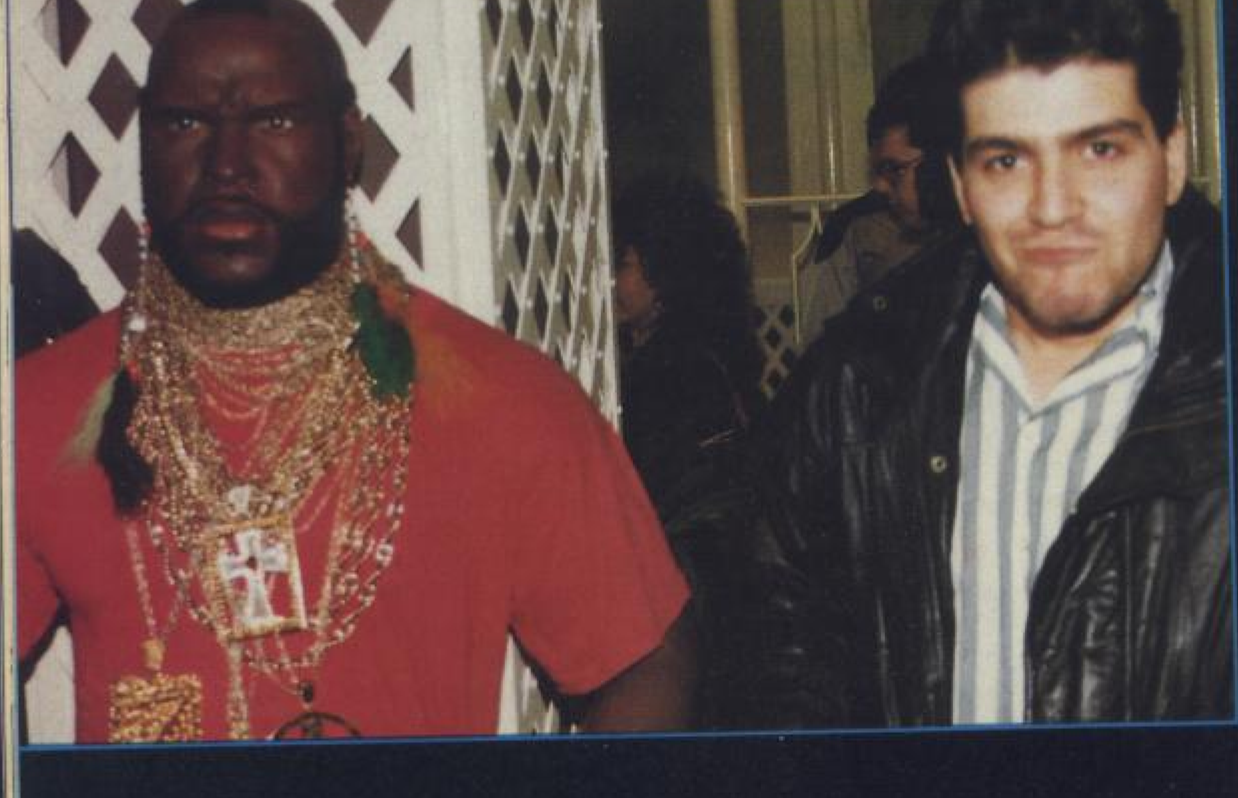
Me thinks we could really get into the London spirit of things and stuff mash and jellied eels down our throats for lunch. But who the hell wants to spend the rest of the day vomiting all over the place?

Nick and I meet up with Ms Toni 'The Smiler' Waknell (Waknell?) and Paul 'Take a photo of me and I'll bust your ass' Chamberlain at Didcot 'watching paint dry is more interesting' Station. As usual, because of unforeseen circumstances (ie crap sense of timing), we are rather late and get a right old ear bashing (isn't that Londoney) from Toni and Paul.

After a small argument which consisted mainly of statements like 'Raffaele, you're a waste of space', we all board the London-bound 125. Needless to say there are no vacant seats and we are forced to loiter menacingly in the buffet car and spend the rest of the journey bumping into people (so much for the first-class accomodation that I'd expected).

We eventually reach Paddington and I suggest to the others that a guided tour of my homeland, Tottenham, would be a fine way of starting the day.

'But we want to see something interesting and classy, Raffaele' (snobs). In the end we decide to go to the Planetarium.



► Grrr . . . Look 'ere sucker, aint no-one taking my place on The A-Team, and I don't care how much your leather jacket was!

The London tube system provides simple minds with endless hours of enjoyment. Listening to a stupid sixties recording of some old wally saying 'mind the gap' every five seconds is great fun. Waiting for the train to arrive, we stand on the platform saying the things that people usually say when they're on the underground like; 'Hey! look at that mouse.' and 'I hope there isn't a fire.' Or,'How did they manage to get the graffiti on that side?' and 'Imagine if a lunatic decided to throw you under a train.'

For some inexplicable reason, Nick decides to head-butt a complete stranger. Apparently he thought it was me standing next to him (snigger). The train arrives and yes, you guessed it, no seats were available. Once our destination is reached, we vote on having lunch before the Planetarium is attended. After a bit of though we opt for a good traditional British meal – Pizza.

I find the Planetarium so therapeutic and relaxing that I almost nod off in the middle of the presentation. The Planetarium show consists of a taped speech by a well known female astronomer whose name eludes me. This woman obviously owns a three-foot wide calculator because all she keeps going on about is how the universe is a million billion years old, and how a piece of neutron star material the size of a bogey would weigh a gillion tons! Jesus! Give us a break man! The last time I saw numbers that big, they were negative and on my bank statement . . .



▶ Even Nick and Toni look smart next to Bob Geldof

Next on the agenda – Madam Tussard's (who is that woman??). The first thing I noticed about the place is that if you stand still for more than five seconds people start staring at you thinking you're one of the wax works. Quite an interesting place really – lots of famous people immortalised as wax effigies (why isn't there one of me?). A section of the museum is devoted to modern day stars like Michael Jackson, Sylvester Stallone and David Bowie (they're really short by the way).



▶ Andrew Hewson or Jimmy Saville, Hewson's Toni Waknell isn't quite sure what to think?

▶ Does this boy never stop . . . ?



▶ Nick tries to swap jackets with . . . (answers on a postcard to the usual address)



Stardate: 9 November 1988

I'm proud to announce that my girlfriend's pet cat, Bonnie, has had kittens. A surprise to say the least as I didn't even know the thing was pregnant. The three offspring are only about four inches long and soppy people (everybody to date) tend to clamour round them saying, 'ahh'.

Stardate: 11 November 1988

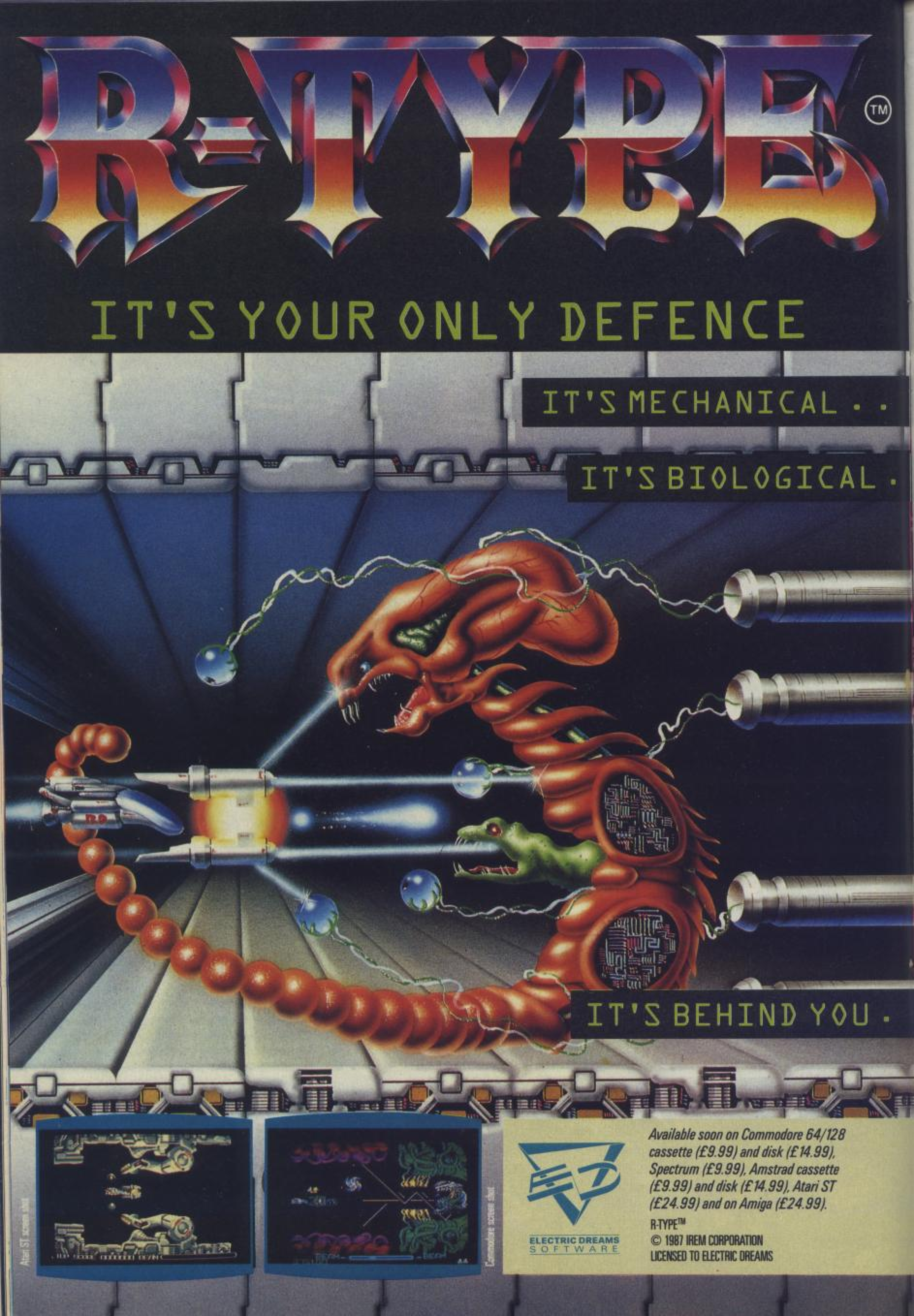
It's off to Hewson HQ to drop off the photos for the log. As usual I had to make my own coffee. Next time I'll make it in secret otherwise everybody piles into the kitchen like a bunch of hooligans after you, mugs in hand, shouting; 'Mines white with two sugars!' or 'That's very kind of you Raf!.' (And they expect you to clean up the mess afterwards!)

Through the post arrives some sample sound effects and music for *Stormlord* from Dave Rogers. I hastily incorporate them into the program to have a listen. The sound effects are splendid, but the main tune still needs working on.

The first aliens are being incorporated into *Stormlord*. I have altered the way the game works slightly by ensuring that the main characters gets destroyed as soon as foe touches him, as opposed to just decreasing his energy level. This will give me greater control in designing the obstacles he will face.

Stardate: 13 November 1988

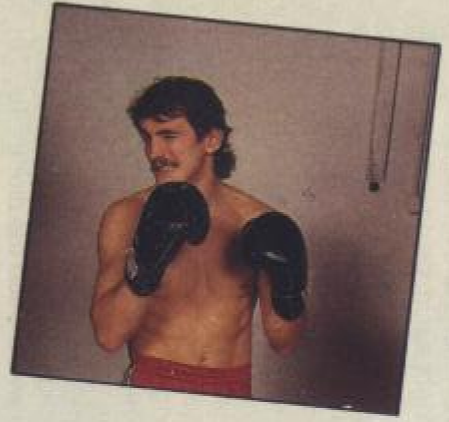
I think I'm running out of space, so before I get rudely interrupted by good old Dominic I better say bye . . . (And not one apology for cocking up the *Stormlord* demo! – Ed.)


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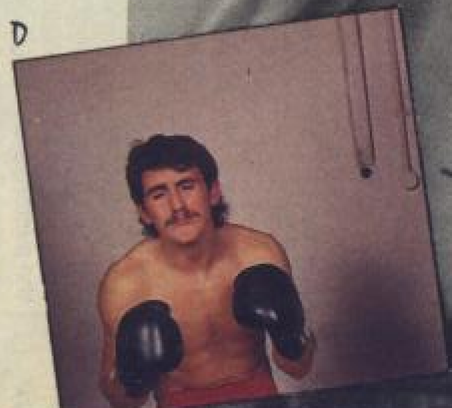




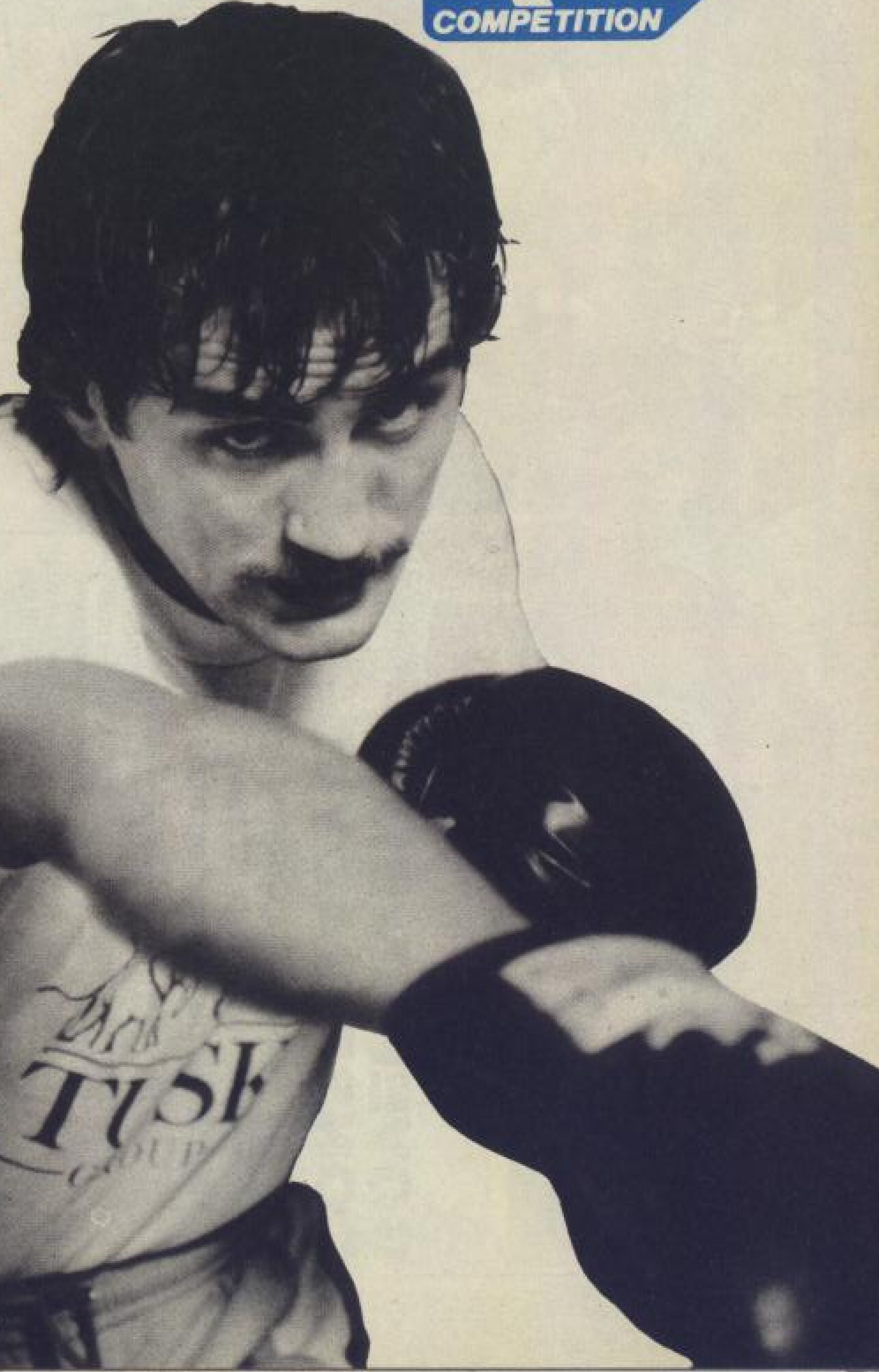
B



C



D



BY FAIR MEANS OR FOUL

is the latest game from the Leeds-based company **Superior Software**, and takes the player into the realms of 'Enry Cooper, Mike Tyson, Frank Bruno, and of course the champion of them all, Mr Rocky 'Sly Stallone' Balboa. What I'm talking about is obviously the controversial sport of boxing, made even more so in this game due to all dastardly and illegal moves which it permits. Kicks, head butts, low punches all are here. Playing it is just like going through the CRASH office in fact.

Steve Hanson, the Director of Superior Software, phoned me the other day and asked for a comp on his bruising new game. 'Certainly,' I said, 'if you'll ask your large Rocky lookalike to stop using my cupboard door as a punching bag.' 'No problem,' replied Steve and soon enough Mr Neanderthal features went on his way, but not before he'd given me a piece of paper and stopped to stroke Tiddles the office cat – not such a bad chap really.

The prizes for this knockout (groan) comp are as follows . . . The **first-prize** winner will receive **two tickets** to the next **Barry McGuigan fight** staged in Britain, a **Mike Tyson boxing video** and a copy of *By Fair Means Or Foul* signed by Barry McGuigan. The next **four** postcards out of the boxing glove win their senders a signed copy of *By Fair Means Or Foul*. Just look at the pictures scattered around this page and tell us what type of punch would make Barry act in the way depicted (say that again? – Ed). Then put your entry into an envelope and Mr Postie will do the rest. All entries must reach us by January 27, and any late entries will be completely ignored – you have been warned. Send your entries to **KNOW WHAT I MEAN 'ARRY, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

COMMS

GOVERNMENT CONSPIRACY!!!

After losing Issue 58's Comms in the post PAUL EVANS now finds BT have 'accidentally' disconnected him. . . .

WELCOME TO another great Comms column (slight exaggeration there – Ed). Apparently it's survived the post system to get all the way to Ludlow (just), so congratulations to the Post Office. As for BT – I hope everyone gets Mercury poisoning, at least until they fix my modem. Due to said problems I've therefore decided to have a look at some DIY.

It's basically a reset switch which, when fitted, will prevent the VTX from taking control from the computer ROM when you power-up, leaving you free to program, word-process, or play games! On the touch of the switch, the VTX will boot-up and start the terminal software. This could save a lot of messing around with the peripheral port. The project itself is very easy, involving a bit of soldering and track cutting. The ingredients are one 'push-to-make-contact' switch and one N1001 Diode.

EDITOR'S WARNING!: according to Paul all details have been tested with success, but neither he nor CRASH hold any responsibility for this modification. If you really want to proceed be warned it's purely AT YOUR OWN RISK – it will INVALIDATE ANY GUARANTEES you have!

First, disconnect all connections from the modem (note: this is VTX 5000 ONLY), tip it upside-down and place it on an even surface. There are four screw-terminals at each corner of the case, unscrew these, remove screws and without lifting the bottom off, tip case back up. Now carefully lift top off. Position case with front panel facing you and lift out back silver plate, just to make life easier.

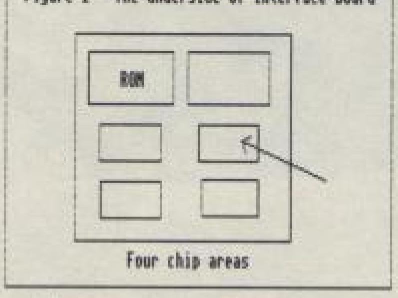
The internals comprise two boards with a ribbon cable between them. The brown board is the actual modem whilst the green is the interface board. We're only interested in the green area, so leave the brown board untouched.

Unscrew the four terminals on each corner of the green board. Be very careful as the ribbon cable is very fragile. Slowly turn over board, swinging it by ribbon cable, until it's upside-down and on top of the brown board.

FIGURE IT OUT

Look at figures 2 and 3. Fig.2 shows where the area we need to work on is. Fig.3 shows what we're going to do. Find the marked track in the diagram on board. When you're sure it's the right one, cut it as shown, using the edge of a screwdriver or knife. Be **very** careful not to damage other tracks. Do not rush. Make sure the track is completely broken so that there's no way the current could get through.

Figure 2 - The underside of interface board



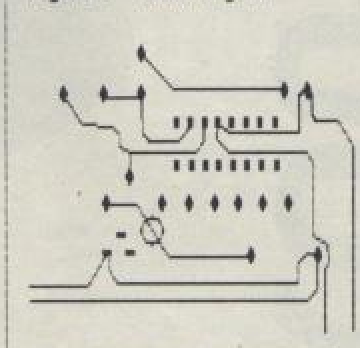
When you're satisfied, clear away debris and tip the board upright again, being careful of the cable. Rescrew it and make sure it's steady. Now heat up the soldering iron. In fig.4 there are two points marked around the area of the ROM chip (the one with the surface covered by tape). Find XTAL (a large silver object) and slowly bend it upright. The second point should now be easier to access.

Next, solder two long-ish wires onto the switch, one for each terminal. Wrap the ends of the wire around the diode pins, one for each side. It doesn't matter which side you use. Solder them in and make sure they're secure.

XTAL UNDERCOVER

Now get the diode ready and make sure you know where the two points are. Point 1 is by the printed '900' on the board by the small socketed chip, and point 2 is just above TR1. When you're sure, solder the diode in these two points. The stripe on the diode must be on the left, so that the pin goes into point one, and the other side into point two. The best soldering technique is heating the base of the diode pin and pushing it into the point, which will heat up and let the pin through. Make sure both pins are secure in their new sockets.

Figure 3 - Track layout



Make break on the circled line

It may be a good idea to cover the XTAL with insulating tape, to make sure it doesn't short on the diode pin. Also, multitest the whole thing so you find out if you have gone wrong BEFORE you power-up. To put in the finishing touch, drill a hole in the front panel and mount the switch there. Re-assemble the entire thing and try it!

If the switch has no effect, check the diode is in correctly, or that the track is scraped off successfully. If you have made a mistake, it is unlikely you have done any damage! Fortunately, as the modification is only to the interface, BT approval will not be affected.

Figure 4 - Diode Connections

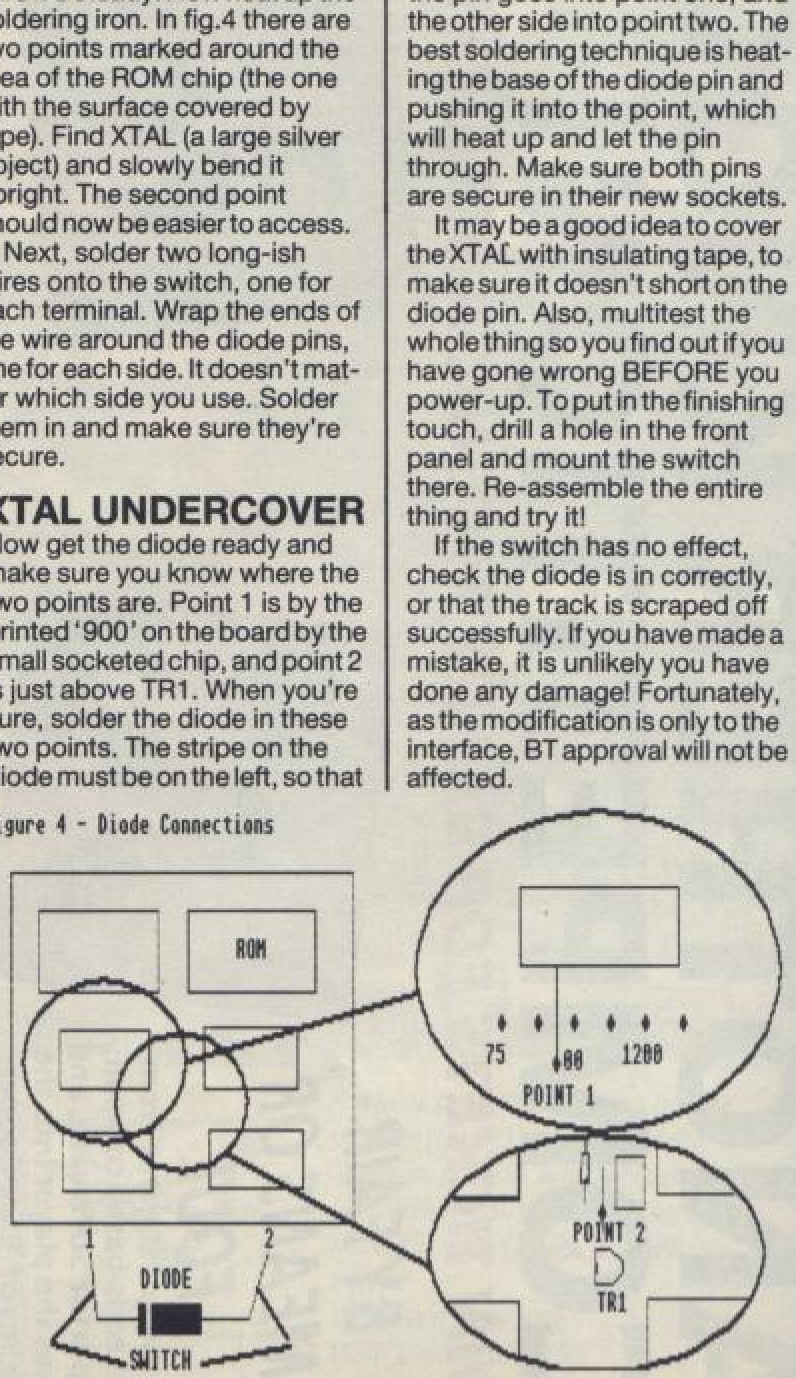
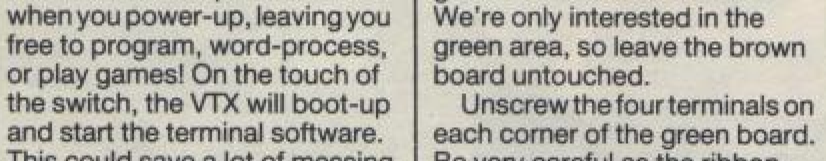


Figure 1 - The VTX Internals




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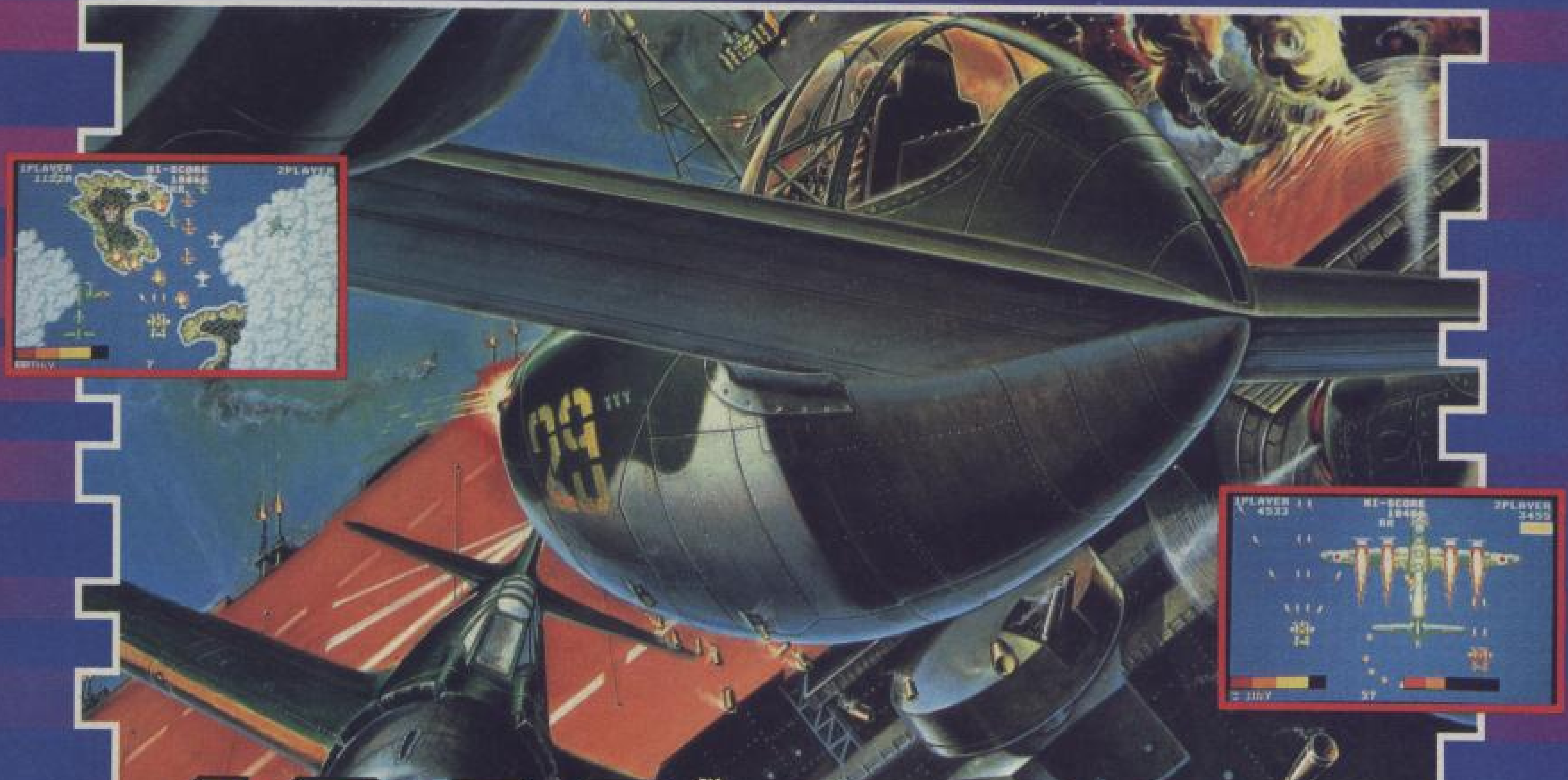


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Screen shots from various systems

CAPCOM™

GIANTS OF THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY

LLOYD MANGRAM'S 1988 LOOKBACK

CRASH's own Master Of Ceremonies, LLOYD MANGRAM, gets out his old binder and reflects over the past year. A year which saw bundles of budget games overflowing a market which had just discovered the lucrative market of film licences . . .

Probably the most noticeable trend in 1988 has been the decline in the number of full price releases. Budget games, by contrast, seem to have reached an absolute apogee – to decline next year, I forecast. While the poor quality of many of them is disappointing they sell extremely well, dominating the Gallup charts. But what can be welcomed almost without reservation is the tendency for full-price software, often of the highest quality, to be rereleased at a budget price. For people who missed them the first time around these are a golden opportunity to catch up on CRASH Smashes.

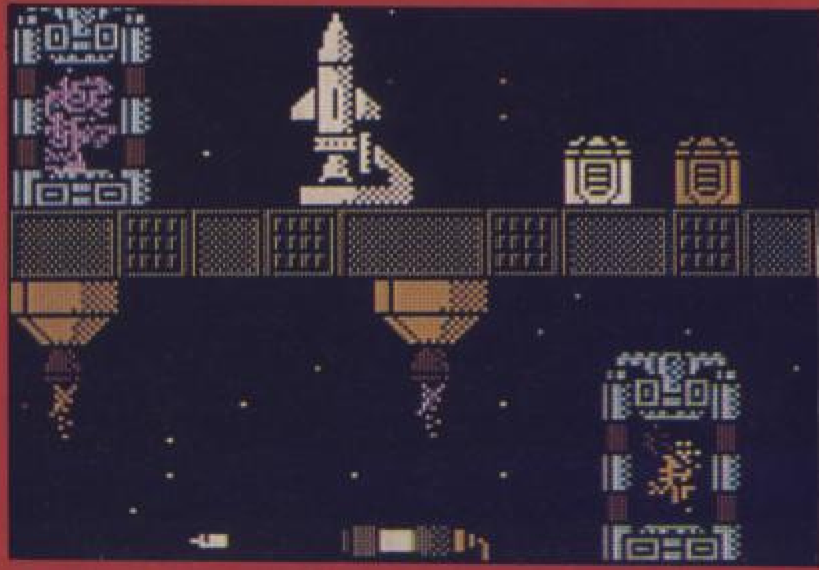
Licensing deals still continue to dominate the industry, *Postman Pat* has extended this even into the budget side of things. On the plus side the quality of many of these games seems to have improved, *RoboCop*'s a sterling example of that. While I would still prefer games to be inspired by original gameplay, rather than cashing in on a popular film/coin-op, there's much to celebrate about 1988.

January

Ocean started off the year with a New Year's resolution to produce CRASH Smashes. *Combat School* was their first, a coin-op conversion which superbly recreated arcade playability over seven training sessions. Physical exertion of a more peaceful type (or maybe not) featured in Ocean's second Smash – *Match Day II*. The original game narrowly missed being a Smash, but went on to kick around the Readers' Charts for three years! Programmers Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond incorporated a host of new features to make the sequel the definitive football sim – and Phil's favourite game.

Narrowly missing a Smash was **Infogrames'** *Sidewalk* – an adventure so novel it got reviewed like a normal game! The typically Gallic objective was to get yourself ready for taking out your girlfriend. As the year progressed French software houses became increasingly active in the UK market, and with games like this they were very welcome. A rather less original game was the much-belated official conversion of the *Star Wars* arcade game. While two reviewers raved over it, Robin was more reserved, thinking it a little late.

Outside the review pages Simon Goodwin exclusively revealed news of the Spectrum superclone SAM. Intended to be just £99.95 with superior hardware its makers (**Miles Gordon Technology**) have wavered between promoting it as a games machine, or an education computer for export. We're still waiting to see it released for either market.





On a sadder note January saw the departure of Derek Brewster, CRASH's long-standing adventure columnist whose wide-ranging introductions were famous. The author of some brilliant games for the now-defunct **Micromega** Derek left to begin his own software house – **Zeppelin Games**. For the next few months the adventure section was to be handled by the normal reviewing team.

February

A trio of Smashes featured in this issue, one arcade, *IK+*; one adventure, *Knight Orc*, and one strategy, *Blitzkrieg*. Unfortunately **CCS**'s strategy Smash was to be one of very rare breed in '88. Philippa had very little to review. Just below 90% was *Super Hang On*, a respectable arcade conversion, *Inside Outing*, a *MOVIE* lookalike from **The Edge**; *Terramex*, **Quicksilva** soldiered on with another arcade adventure, and finally *Flying Shark*.

The last of these was developed by **Graftgold**, a programming team who 'defected' from **Hewson** to **Firebird**.

Strengthening the CRASH team were new reviewers Mark 'James Brown' Caswell and Gordon '*Hunter's Moon*' Houghton. The latter was subsequently kidnapped by ZZAP!, brainwashed and eventually fooled into becoming Editor there.

March

Causing something of a buzz this month was *Firefly*, the first release from **Special FX**, a new Liverpool-based programming team of mostly ex-Ocean staff – the marketing of their games remained with Ocean, though.

Arcade action in the *Exolon* vein gave **Gremlin Graphics** their first hit of '88, impressing us all with some big and colourful graphics in *Northstar*. More comic entertainment was provided by **The Edge**'s *Garfield* licence – *Big, Fat, Hairy Deal*. Combining the wit of the cartoon with a real arcade adventure challenge earned a Smash.

Another successful licence was the Oscar-winning Vietnam movie *Platoon*. Ocean used it to sell an extremely playable game which drew obvious inspiration from the film.

April

April is traditionally spring cleaning time at the Towers. Time to sweep out the old and introduce the new. In this case Barnaby Page was the old and rather well-worn while Steve Jarratt and Katharina Hamza were still wrapped in cellophane. In addition a strange new Egyptian personage took over the adventure column and was greeted with two Smashed games from **Rainbird** – *Guild Of Thieves* and *Jinxter*.



For most readers, however, the game of the month was obviously Hewson's *Cybernoid*. Programmed by Raffaele Cecco and Nick Jones it showed Hewson didn't rely on Graftgold for quality product. A strong contender for shoot-'em-up of '88 its Nick Roberts's favourite game. By contrast with such originality **Imagine**'s coin-op conversion *Rastan* was, while very good, not of Smash quality (despite what the adverts said!).

Yet more evidence for the importance of originality and technical innovation was produced by the 1987 CRASH Readers' Awards. **Incentive**'s *Driller* won a total of five awards including Best Game and Best Graphics. Sadly missing from the awards was a software house which, without a single licence, dominated Spectrum gaming between 1984 and 1986. Throughout their reign **Ultimate** refused all interviews, building up an incredible mystique. In 1988 they finally gave an interview to Roger Kean (former CRASH Editor), explaining why they'd disappeared from the UK market and how the revolutionary *Knight Lore* had been held back from release for a YEAR after its completion.

May

Undoubted star of this issue was Nick Roberts, whose Playing Tips extravaganza put his picture on the cover. Sharing it with him was *Action Force II*, a Smashed licence which followed an original rated at just 35%. Congratulations to **Virgin Games** for that. Another sequel, and just as violent, was Imagine's *Target; Renegade*. A two-player option, more content (via a multiload) and even better playability made this hit.

But Spectrums have more to offer than just mindless violence, and **Pete Cooke** proved it with the budget puzzler *Brainstorm*. Beneath some very primitive graphics was a highly addictive game. And an even more complex challenge was provided by **CRL**'s *Sophistry*. 21 levels of isometric puzzles required close reading of some baffling instructions. Once you figured it out, though, this was a compellingly original game. Sadly its release by CRL marked the close of a distribution deal with **Electronic Arts**, which developed into a bitter legal wrangle.

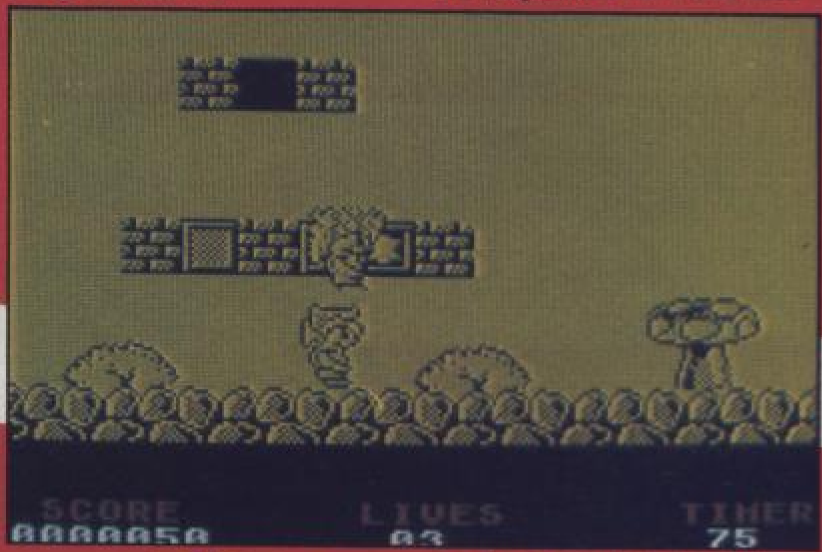
A happier note was sounded in this Issue by the history victory of Robin Candy in the CRASH Challenge. Finally a reviewer had won! *Star Wars* provided the entertainment.

June

Pete Cooke scored his second hit in as many months with *Earthlight*. Principally a shoot-'em-up, it used a novel 3-D presentation to impress CRASH's hardened reviewers. By contrast US Gold's **GO!** label chose a licence over originality in converting the **Capcom** arcade hit *Bionic Commando*. Fortunately the game itself was fairly novel, the hero swinging from tree to tree with his bionic arm, while the programming was impressive. One of the better coin-op conversions, in fact.

A licence of a different sort was popular with Gremlin who'd previously produced two *MASK* games. The third was the best of the lot and *VENOM Strikes Back* was duly Smashed. Great use of colour and sound, together with gripping gameplay, made for a fantastic game.

Acheton, by contrast, was text-only. But Samara raved over **Topologika**'s classic, disk-only adventure. Elsewhere in the magazine Raffaele *Cybernoid* Cecco began his month-by-month account of the programming of *Stormlord*.



July

Precariously taped to this month's cover was one of our intermittent Sneak Preview cassettes. Playable demos of **Incentive**'s *Dark Side* and **System 3**'s *Last Ninja II* made the extra 25p cost well worth it (in our opinion). As for actual reviews **Domark** returned with *The Empire Strikes Back*, blessed with more ambitious 128K sound than the ST – an excellent conversion of the arcade game. A perhaps even bigger licence backed Gremlin's superb *Mickey Mouse*. Five limited sub-games, together with some great graphics and playability made for a novel game.

The issue's top two games bravely disdained costly licences however. Spectrum veterans **Denton Designs** dropped four people into a land *Where Time Stood Still*. Beautiful to look at, with great prehistoric monsters, the only pity was that it was 128K-only, and perhaps not as big as it first seemed (a 48K version is in the pipeline!). Even more impressive graphics of the Freescape variety featured in the *Driller* sequel *Dark Side*. Marginally faster with much greater depth of play this was another superb game from Incentive. Readers who doubted it only had to look at the demo to be convinced.

As for features we had the debut of Mel Croucher's irregular Monitor feature which has been amusing, irritating and provoking readers ever since. His first article on computer addiction set the tone for what was to follow.

August

This month saw another CRASH editor, Steve Jarratt, depart for those ever greener new pastures. Taking his place was a confirmed Spectrum enthusiast, who'd been with CRASH almost right from the start as one of the anonymous (for tax reasons in his case) reviewers. Dominic Handy enthusiastically took over the magazine's helm and readers were soon learning of his problems in getting a new Ford Fiesta. Helping Dominic with the new zestful CRASH came Phil 'footy' King – master of *Match Day II*.

Suffering considerably more turmoil was the software house **Rainbow Arts** who'd written *The Great Giana Sisters*. Production problems played havoc with our screen shots while legal action by **Nintendo** ensured the game would sadly never be released due to its resemblance to their *Mario Brothers*.

Hewson, on the other hand, smoothly continued their run of successes with the shoot-'em-up *Marauder*. The other Smash was that increasingly rare thing, a strategy game. *Stalingrad* was CCS's recreation of the German's crucial WWII siege of the Russian city. Games just below Smash status were *Road Blasters*, *Alternative World Games* and *Impossible Mission II*.

In the expanding features department we had an article exploring the sexism-and-censorship debate. An expanded Adventure Trail included an interview with **Magnetic Scrolls** – the people behind *The Pawn* and *Jinxter*. While the CRASH review team took a look at the 16-bit 'wonder computers' to ▶





see if they're all that they're cracked up to be.

September

The results of the CRASHtionnaire held earlier in the year showed that an update of the reviewing system was in order. Dominic Handy set to it and Issue 56 implemented many of the readers' suggestions. Unfortunately the new system had hardly any games to be used on. The only Smash was **Cascade**'s licence of a number one pop song. *19 Part One – Boot Camp* had the player struggling through his training for Vietnam. Another multiload game it had several, very tough events with some great 128K music.

Below 90% were some pretty good games though. *Games: Winter Edition* was the latest in a long line of multi-sports simulations. Each event was well-produced but wasn't substantially different from what had appeared before. Distinctly warmer, post-apocalypse climes were the scene for **Elite**'s racing-cum-blasting *Overlander* game. Other good games of the month were the tactical arcade game *Barbarian* from **Psygnosis/Melbourne House** and *T-Wrecks* (to be released in December as *The Muncher*) from Gremlin Graphics.

Monitor this month investigated killer computers while Ian Phillipson examined the role that computers may play in education. In search of more time to pursue his programming Tech Niche's Simon N Goodwin bowed out after three years with CRASH.

October

After the lull an avalanche. The first of five Smashes was *Gold, Silver, Bronze* from **Epyx**. This brought *Summer Games I, II* and *Winter Games* together on one package for £14.99. The two *Summer Games* programs were new to the Spectrum and with 23 events in all this was a great bargain. No less so was US Gold's *Leader Board Par 3*, this compilation included *Leader Board* along with two previously unreviewed golf games; *Leader Board Tournament* and *World Class Leader Board*. Players could compete on any of 12 world famous golf courses in the ultimate in golfing simulations.

Another value-for-money hit was the budget Smash *Joe Blade II*. Armed only with his Doc Martens, Joe had already rescued 20 hostages in ten minutes. In the second game, sub-games added to the variety making this very playable. The other two Smashes were the innovative *Intensity* from Firebird/Graftgold and the coin-op conversion *Alien Syndrome* from **Ace** (AKA **Softek**).



Just missing out on being a sixth Smash was *Cybernoid II* which the reviewers felt was just a little too close to the admittedly great original.

November

Another top-notch CRASH preview tape adorned the issue with one of the best covers of the year. The playable demos were *RoboCop* (Smashed last issue) and *Total Eclipse* (Smashed this issue).

The Ocean licence which brings back memories of literally blistering pain returned as *Daley Thompson's Olympic Challenge*. Skill was downplayed a little by comparison with the earlier games, while the toughness was much, much harder requiring lots of blood, sweat and tears – merely to compete. The other Smash was thankfully somewhat more sedate. *Draconus* was a fascinating arcade adventure and the first Smash for Derek Brewster's **Zeppelin Games**.

On the margins of a Smash were *Crime Busters*, a budget sequel; *Fernandez Must Die*, one or two player *Commando*-style action, and the hilarious *Foxx Fights Back*. The latter two marked the debut of **Mirrorsoft**'s new, street cred label **Imageworks**.



December

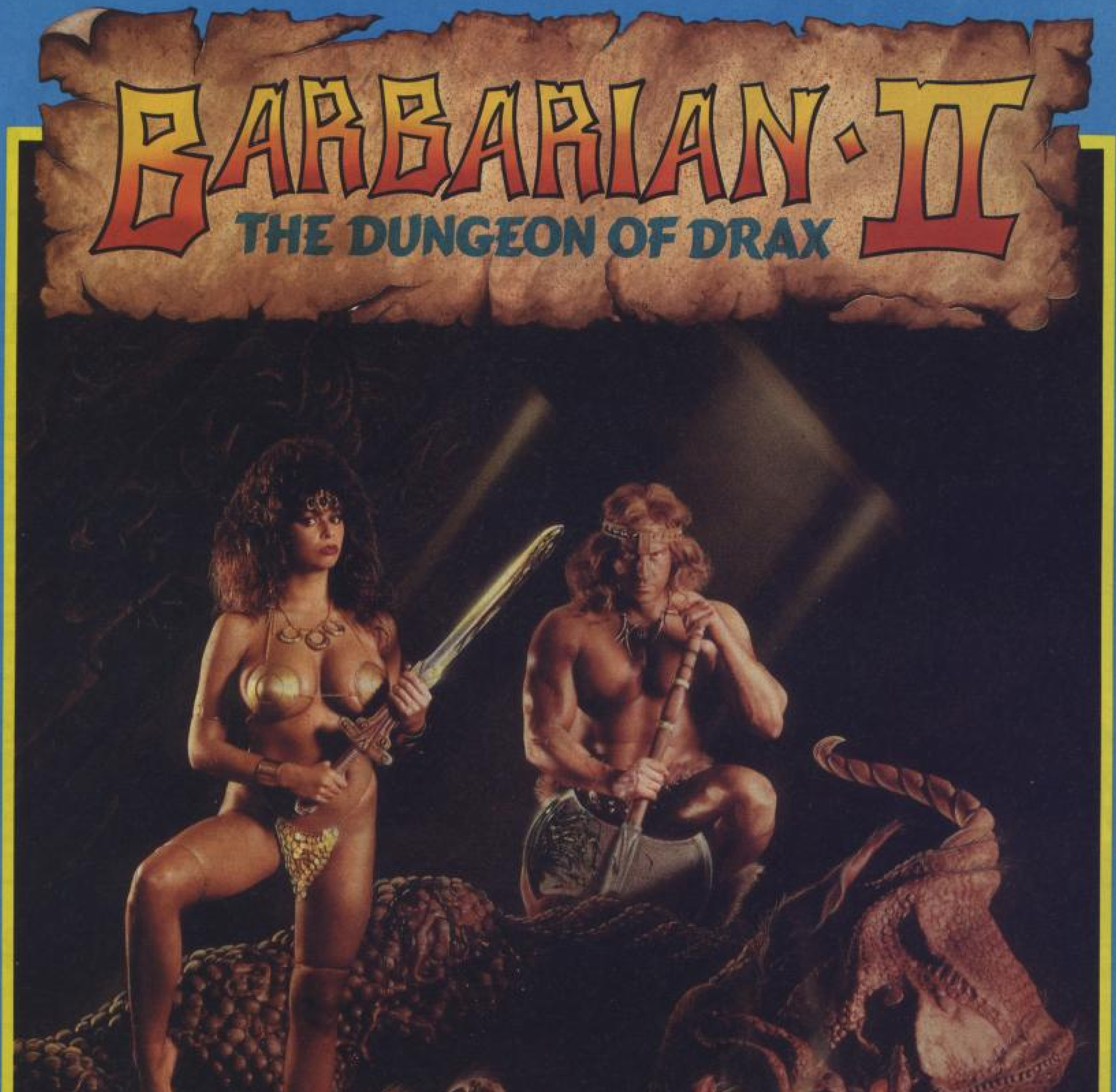
This had to be one of our best Christmas Specials: 212 pages, 16 pages of puzzles, 32 pages of Playing Tips, five Smashes AND a Sneak Preview tape. On one side there was the Smashed arcade conversion *Thunder Blade*, on the other the futuristic racing game *LED Storm*. The former had some great graphics and playability, although the multiload was a bit of a bind.

Also aiming to be the Christmas number one was another arcade hit, *Operation Wolf* from Ocean. Stunning graphics, an intelligent multiload system and arcade playability made this a great conversion. A slightly older licence produced **Mediagenic**'s *R-Type*. With unique selling points – protected by legal actions – this was another game which lived up to its arcade origins.

More original action was featured in the sequel to a game which never appeared on the Spectrum, *Last Ninja II*. Fantastic graphics, a huge amount of multiloaded content, great puzzles and superb playability made this **System 3**'s best Spectrum game ever.

Finally there was Ocean's *RoboCop* which is almost certainly the best recreation of a film on a computer. Based on the key scenes from the all-action movie the game complemented the film wonderfully.

Amazingly Spectrum software has kept up its improvement over the year. While there's been no great revolutionary new system like Filmation or Freescape, the improvement in the quality of licensed games is heartening. At the same time competition from the 16-bit market is almost disappointing. Where the 16-bit machines have shown off their capabilities in games like *Starglider*, the Spectrum conversions have moved forward the limits of 8-bit gaming in response. *Carrier Command*, if it's ever released, seems likely to be another example of this. For the most part, though, 16-bit games remain essentially 8-bit ones with flash graphics. Unlike these machines the Spectrum is assured a steady flow of games designed to find new limits to its capabilities. I'm really looking forward to 1989 . . .





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ADVENTURE TRAIL with Samara

Oh why is it so cold in this country? The only way I can remind myself of home is to climb inside the microwave (don't try it at home, by the way!). My half-brother's coming over to see me this month (I say 'half' because he's half human and half animal). Anyway, he's staying for a few months, so I'd better watch out. The last time he came over to England he killed two of Phil's sheep – a 'sacrifice' to the gods! Never mind, I'll soon be flying my way back to opulent Egypt, where the snow never falls and we leave out sheep's-eye pies for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve. I can't wait to get back home, away from the weird, ghetto-blasting monsters which lurk in the dark corridors of CRASH Towers (ZZAP reviewers, I think they're called). The only way I can calm myself down (and warm myself up) is to settle back with a couple of adventures, just right for these long, cold winter nights.



A SIMPLE CASE OF ESPIONAGE

Skyslip Software, £9.95

This month's trail begins with the welcome debut of a new software house who're intending to cover the whole range of software, with adventures as well as arcade games. Skyslip Software (☎091-565 8473)is a subsidiary of Rock City Music, a leading UK music distributor, and their first seven releases include three adventures. Two of these star private-eye, Rick Shaw (geddit?). With seedy offices in present day New York the scenarios have a strong *film noir*, Thirties feel.

The first adventure, *A Simple Case Of Espionage*, has Mr Shaw just moping around the office (sounds familiar) when he receives a phone call from a hysterical woman (I told you it had a Thirties atmosphere). Mrs Kingsley tells Rick that she thinks her husband is having an affair. Rick is unimpressed; he's dealt with this sort of case time and time again and is yearning for some real action – just like the detectives in the movies. For Rick, adultery is decidedly unexciting!

The actual adventure begins with Rick at the front door of the Kingsleys' mansion, arriving for his 8pm appointment with the distraught wife. Once inside Rick finds the house expensively and tastefully furnished. After Rick takes a seat Mrs Kingsley describes the strange events which have been occurring, namely a strange man phoning the house asking where Mr Kingsley is (what's strange about that?). She has also received more sinister-sounding calls from someone who immediately puts the receiver down when she answers.

Mrs Kingsley has already established a theory to explain these events; her husband is having an affair and has been caught by a jealous husband (quite logical really!). She wants Rick to 'do the usual', ie follow Mr Kingsley to see what he's up to. No sooner than Rick agrees than he is caught up in that glamorous world of espionage which he's always dreamed of.

And is the game itself something to dream about? Well to begin with it's more of a nightmare as it appears impossible to leave the immediate area of the house. Three locations exist at the end of the gravel driveway, but none offer any way out. One contains a telephone box, which can only be used if you know the correct number. So it seems the only way forward is to wait until dark, then sneak back into the house through a dodgy window. If you try to enter in broad daylight you're in for a nasty surprise.

Once inside the house you're free to do some real exploring, but careful not to make too much noise; Mrs Kingsley is asleep upstairs (you can even go into her room – this Rick chap's got no scruples, has he?). The house contains some interesting objects such as a Persian rug and even a closed-circuit TV monitor. But unfortunately, most can't be examined, and many of the object names aren't even recognised by the parser and thus are there purely for decoration.

Similar problems exist with verbs, of which few seem to be accepted. One verb that is allowed is CLIMB, but even this usually produces the reply 'Only monkeys climb', unless used in one or two special places. These problems all



▶

go to make Rick's task extremely difficult. Things aren't totally serious however, as removing your clothes results in your arrest by a passing policeman – even when you're behind closed doors with not a window in sight!

The small size of the vocabulary, and short text descriptions, are frustrating so it's as well the 128K version (on the flip-side) has some graphics. These consist of some beautifully-presented isometric rooms (reminiscent of the arcade adventure *Movie* – 93%, Issue 26). Strangely people never appear in these rooms, even if mentioned in the text which, because of the graphics, must be scrolled bit by bit below. These graphics nevertheless help create a sense of atmosphere which is quite impressive – and sadly missing from the 48K game.

The actual adventure underneath the graphics lacks the interaction and depth of some less aesthetically attractive adventures and is frustratingly difficult. Even so, Skyslip Software have produced a refreshingly different game, breaking away from clichéd adventure presentation styles. Hopefully the second Rich Shaw game, *The Lost Legacy of Xim*, will have gameplay to match – look out for next month's review!

Overall 72%

LANCELOT

Level 9, £14.95 tape, £19.95 triple format disk

Everyone must have heard of the legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, and especially of the gallant Sir Lancelot, bravest Knight of all, who lost his heart to the fair Queen Guenever. But Level 9's *Lancelot* is based not on Hollywood films, which misinterpret some of the original tales, but on *Le Morte D'Arthur*, a book by Sir Thomas Malory, published in 1485. And the booklet accompanying the game contains a short version of the Arthurian legends to help set the scene.

Sir Lancelot du Lake is a fitting hero for the game – he was never fairly beaten in any fight. The story of how he became the best knight in the world starts when he is riding along a forest road and comes to a ford – and this is also where the adventure begins.

A Black Knight challenges him, telling him that he must prove his worth in order to cross the ford. Accepting the challenge results in an easy victory for Lancelot, who then has the choice of either killing or sparing his opponent. Not to give too much away it's a good idea to accept the Knight's surrender for he is none other than King Arthur. Thus Lancelot is subsequently knighted and sent off to the mythical realm of Logris where valorous deeds must be done to earn the accolade of best knight.

As well as freeing imprisoned knights, there are many unknown quests for Lancelot to complete in Logris, before returning to Camelot. The final part of this epic adventure is the Quest for The Holy Grail, where Lancelot goes in search of the elusive golden chalice. You are also given a choice, on loading, of going straight to this final segment of the adventure.

Commands are issued using a typically-sophisticated Level 9 parser, with provision for interaction with the many other knights and characters encountered by Lancelot. And he certainly gets around a bit (in both senses of the phrase!), gadding about Britain and even into Northern France, while losing his head over his beloved Guenever and the stunningly beautiful Elaine, who he rescues from a bath of boiling water!

One unusual feature of *Lancelot* is the ability to go to a known place by simply typing GO TO place (as in *Knight Orc*). Objects can also be discovered in a similar manner by entering FIND object. Lancelot then goes on 'automatic pilot', selecting the shortest route to stipulated place/object. This feature makes laborious mapping largely unnecessary, although at times it can be a little confusing.

Character interaction plays an important part in the adventure, and Lancelot may talk to the colourful characters he meets and order loyal knights to follow him, as well as issuing more complex commands such as SIR ECTOR, GO SOUTH, TAKE EVERYTHING, THEN GO NORTH.

Of course, an essential part of the game is the combat. This is handled automatically, with the text giving a blow-by-blow account of what's happening – usually the swashbuckling Lancelot manages to smash his opponents into submission with scarcely a scratch (never mind a wound) to show for it. Usually Lancelot has the opportunity to spare the beaten opponent's life, and should do so because if he is unchivalrous he loses honour and his score (which represents how good a knight he is) is reduced.

Due to its refined parser, and the freedom to travel all over the land without much restriction, *Lancelot* is very easy to get in to, but accomplishing any valorous deeds requires more thought. One problem is that with the lack of the usual adventuring restrictions and the GO TO option, it sometimes appears to play by itself. Despite this, there is real character interaction and virtually every object found can be examined, helping to create a good adventuring atmosphere.

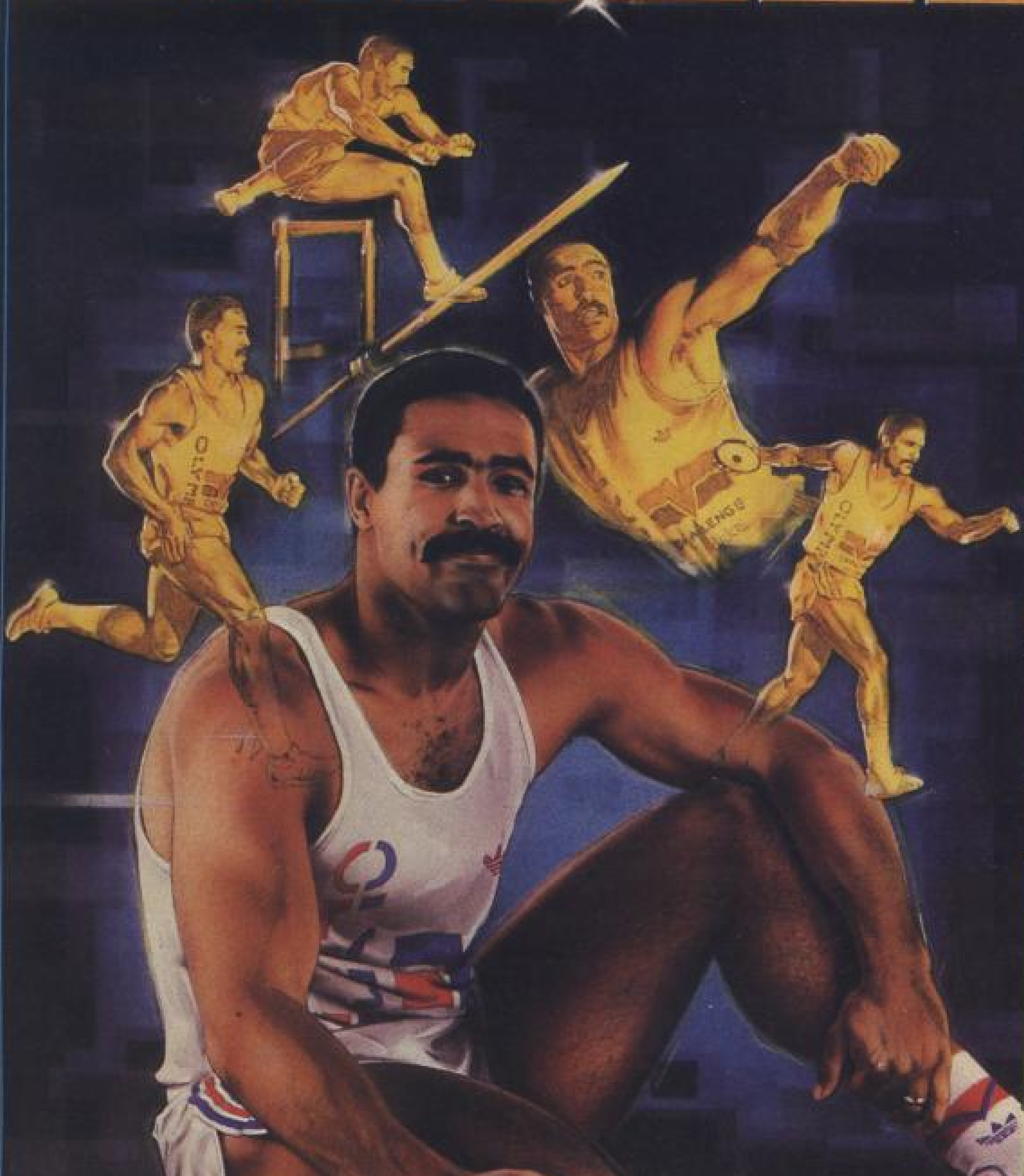
The +3 version comes on an unusual triple format disk (the other two formats being Amstrad CPC and Amstrad PCW). Once the main program has been loaded you flip the disk so that pictures can be loaded from it as necessary. Graphics are monochromatic and about average, but can be made smaller by scrolling them up/down the screen Amiga fashion – which is nice. The disk also allows the conversion of previous Level 9 dual format disks (Amstrad CPC/PCW), including *Knight Orc* and *Time & Magick*, to the +3.

In conclusion, *Lancelot* is truly an epic adventure which successfully captures the mood of Arthurian Britain with some lengthy, accurate descriptions. Technically superb with fluent play make this is a very fine adventure which is well worth the rather high asking price. A further incentive for purchase is the included competition, in which the winner will receive a silver 'replica' of the mythical Holy Grail (I thought it was gold)!

Overall 90%



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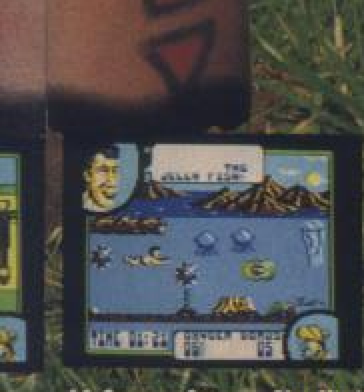
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LM'S FORUM



Up hill, down dale . . . as winter sets in the cottage is becoming more and more isolated, and I must say I don't relish the thought of cycling home in the cold and the dark. They make me come into the Towers to use this ridiculous word processor now!

Dom says it's 'more efficient' or something. Efficiency is as efficiency does, according to grandma – anyway, you've been rather efficient at letter-writing this month, and choosing what to print was a difficult decision.

The £30 software prize goes to someone who's obviously well on his way to writing the Oxford Companion To Coin-Op Conversions, **but other topics include . . . well, read on and see.**

COIN-OPS RULE, OK?

Dear Lloyd
I saw your suggested topic for a letter in the 'closing titles' of Forum and decided I would inform you of what I think will be 'in' as Spectrum games go, a year from now.

I came to the obvious (and I think definite) conclusion that the trusty arcade conversion will still be the most popular game. 'But won't everybody be tired of conversions?' I hear you cry. I think not!

Last Christmas we had the overwhelming success of the arcade-cum-computer smash *Out Run*, which was the clear best-seller for about three months over the festive season and after.

Look at some of the CRASH Smashes of 1987. There was *Enduro Racer*, *Combat School* and the much-talked-about *Gauntlet* – not excluding others such as *720°*, *Athena*, *Space Harrier* and *Star Wars*.

Following on this year we had more of the same: *Street Fighter*, *Gauntlet II*, *Flying Shark* and *Super Hang-On* were the more successful of the bunch.

Already this year more coin-ops are being produced for Christmas. These are *Afterburner*, *Operation Wolf*, and *Double Dragon*, which all promise to be the best game this year. All these games look like being the biggest sellers.

It's not just the name of the coin-op that sells the game, though, it's what the game is made up of . . . what makes the game tick. This factor will, I think still be as popular in a year's time.

This factor is violence or destruction. This is what really makes the game exciting, the satisfaction of disposing of the wicked enemy and saving your people. Excluding sports sims, violence is the only thing that gets your adrenaline flowing or your pulse racing.

I feel confident that the main selling game a year form now will be a vigilante beat-'em-up or an alien shoot-'em-up derived from a major coin-op.

Daley Thompson may bring out another decathlon, or a *Football Manager III* may be produced, but they lack the element of violence which tries to break out of everyone.

The CRASH charts prove my point. In 1987 coin-op conversions filled 33% of the chart every month on average. In 1988 this figure had jumped to 40½%. In 1987 violence-related games were 60% of the charts – an obvious majority. In 1988 the figure also increased, this time to 64½%.

Surely if these figures had jumped that much from 1987-1988 they will be even higher next year as they grow in popularity.

On a different note, congrats to Nick Roberts who I criticised way back in Issue 51. His tips and POKEs section is now much improved (with a little help).

Also, who is your granny and what is the meaning of life? Thanks for letting me air my views.
Chris Harby, Lincolnshire

Whew! I don't think there's much I can add to that – except to say that you seem to have forgotten RoboCop, **which is a bit of an oddity because it's not a direct coin-op conversion but a sort of simultaneous conversion of film and arcade game.**

Also, I think you underrate sports sims somewhat – a Football Manager III **would almost certainly top the charts for just as long as most coin-op conversions.**

Finally, Granny won't tell me the meaning of life. She says I'm not old enough yet.

Oh, one other thing – you win £30 worth of software.
LM

PC'D OFF

Dear Lloyd
On Sunday September 18 I went to my first PC Show. What idiot decided to put the music-orientated stands in one area? The resultant noise of fifty trillion clashing music demos was teeth-grating!

Please correct me if I'm wrong (and I expect you will), but surely the NEC would be a better choice of venue for the PC Show? It is more central (not so far from Shropshire!), if anything it's *more* accessible, as easy to find, and, above all, *bigger*!

It's not even as if the majority of visitors are from within the London area – if anything surely they would reach a wider audience in the Midlands. If they really must have the show at Earls Court they could at least have clearly-labelled floor plans at regular intervals. I usually like to think I have quite a good sense of direction, but I spent the better part of an hour trying to find the Incentive stand for a second time!

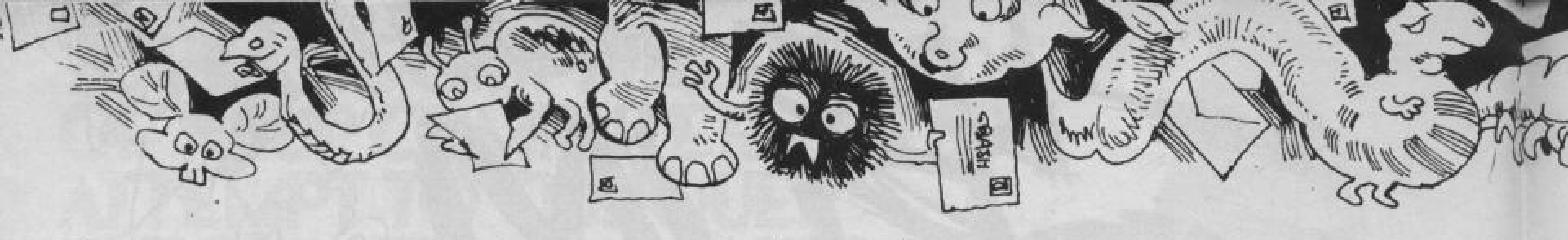
I think it is a shame to ban under-18s from the business section. I am interested in a career in software engineering, so I would have liked to see some of the latest developments – and many other under-18s must be genuinely interested too.

Maybe they should put up a sign saying NO PLAYABLE GAME DEMOS IN THIS HALL, or something similar, to discourage that game demo addict who, once he starts playing (it's always a he, incidentally) refuses to stop until he has completed the damn thing – by which time the person who misguidedly chose the shortest queue will be considering homicide, if not suicide, and will probably have lost interest in the game anyway!

However, I think the business section should be held as a separate show, at another time, and open to visitors under 18 (not that it will make any difference to me next year anyway!). There would be no joystick junkies, but seriously interested under-18s would still go; it would be less crowded, because the people there would want to be there, and won't have just wandered vaguely in from the leisure hall – and there would be loads more actual floor space. Still, I'm probably wasting my ink. See you there next year!
Victoria White ('from the county with an alternative name sniggered at by French people')

PS A serious letter! Gasp!

PPS Does Nick Roberts *really* like Debbie Gibson? Was he



dropped on his head as a baby or something?

Actually he keeps getting dropped on his head by those offensive know-it-alls in THE GAMES MACHINE next door.

You're not a lone voice when you make that point about the PC Show, Victoria – in fact, in all the conversations I've had upon the subject, not a *single* person has had anything positive to say about jamming the leisure and business halls together!

In fact, many people want a separate games show. But perhaps there are, from the organisers' point of view, some reasons against that.

First reason: they only have to advertise and publicise one show instead of two. Second reason: they can claim over 100,000 attendance for the whole show, which sounds good to the exhibitors. If there were two separate shows, neither would get that many. Third reason: the first two days of the show are given over to 'the trade', which includes software distributors and shops – many of which *are* concerned with both business and games.

As for the location issue, I think it's just Londonitis again – you know, 'if it's not in the capital it's a bit provincial'. An absurd attitude when you consider that the majority of gamers – not to mention software houses! – live outside London.

LM

LMLWD

Dear King Lloyd
What a SupercoolHipandTrendySuperblyDrawnMagnificentlyStunningly BrilliantlyMagicallyTerrificallyGreatlyWonderful mag CRASH is. (Well, what else could I say?)
David Hickman, Midlothian

You could add how SupercoolHipandTrendySuperblyDrawnMagnificentlyStunningly BrilliantlyMagicallyTerrificallyGreatlyWonderful *I* am.

KLM

THE REAL PROS

Dear Lloyd
I don't know if this has been done before, but I hope to be the first to analyse programmers and put them in order of merit.

■ **Keith Burkhill** This man is a wizard – I mean anyone who can program scrolling the like of *Ghosts'n'Goblins* and the amazing *Space Harrier* must be the best. But alas, Keith suffers from a rare condition of being able to program the really difficult bits but collision detection and sound fly out the window.

■ **Dominic Robinson** To choose between Keith and Dom was quite a chore. Dom doesn't suffer from anything that I know of – thus, his games are absolutely spotless in terms of presentation and bugs. Having hacked *Zynaps* to bits I know that his talent is fair good and he times things to the absolute T-state.

■ **Realtime** These folks are the best 3-D people in the business. Though I was disappointed with *Starstrike II*, its predecessor and *Starglider* (they like their stars) were superb. Again, these people are faultless in their execution and programming of a game. Telecomsoft should count themselves lucky.

■ **FFFFIMS NAHTANHOJ** This guy has been around since the beginning of home computers, from the likes of *Kong II* (some skellies are jumping out of the cupboard here) to *Firefly* (though the software looks to me to be swiped from *Ghosts'n'Goblins*, tut tut).

■ Last but by no means least, my friend and yours . . . **Raffaele Cecco**. Raf seems to be so like me (perish the thought), inasmuch as he goes about programming a game as would I. The only difference is he has Hewson and I have no-one . . . (sniff, sniff cue violins).

Raf has a flair with graphics and exploits his ideas to the full (unlike most who have an it'll-do policy). His programming skill is good enough, but it's his animation that hit me hardest. (Are you sure the memory is the one that is running out and not your talent, arff arff?)

There you are Lloyd, a different kind of chart for you and I'm sure more of the usual cloning will follow.
Denzill Durkschnider, Worcestershire

It's nice to receive a letter that's not about 16-bit upgrades, not about sexism, not about the state of the world, but actually about what CRASH is most interested in – games!

LM

NUTHIN' BUT A HOUND DAWG

Dear Lloyd
I have recently purchased a Spectrum, and I would like to complain about the quality and quantity of the software I would like to see.

The first three games I purchased were *Sport Of Kings*, *First Past The Post* and *The Derby*. All three are horse-racing games and all three are identical – the horses and jockeys are about an inch high, the race is on a straight track and the horses race in a straight line. Surely someone should write a better program than this.

But the real reason I am writing to you is for an answer – is there a greyhound-racing game? I have looked everywhere but I have not come across one. It might not be the most sought-after program, OK, but original yes. as far as I can see there isn't one.
Lee Eccleshare, Bolton

Try Wembley Greyhounds, **£7.99 from D&H Games. We haven't played it at the Towers, but it seems to have a decent array of features (though the graphics look very limited – mostly text). It will run on 48K or 128K Spectrums.**

You might have trouble finding it in a software shop, but D&H do run a mail-order service.

Write to them at Dept M, 19 Melne Road, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 8LL, enclosing: a cheque or postal order for £7.99 made out to D&H Games, a short letter explaining you want Spectrum Wembley Greyhounds **and giving the catalogue code for this game (which is 'WG'), and a large envelope addressed to yourself with a 25p stamp on it.**

Or, if you want to see their full catalogue, telephone (0438) 728042, and explain that CRASH sent you in the D&H direction!

LM

A POET WRITES (AND WRITES . . .)

The Night Before Christmas 2001

'Twas the night before Christmas
and all through my home
Not a creature was stirring,
not even my clone.

The test tubes were hung by
the burner with care
In hopes that Saint Nicholas
soon would be there.

The androids were nestled all
snug
in their beds
While visions of mc^2 danced
in their heads.

My wife in her jump suit,
and I in my vest
Had just settled down to some
drug-induced rest.

When, out by the labs, there
arose such a clatter
My bed woke me up to see
what was the matter.

Away to the window,
I hastened my mass
Tore open the blast shields, and
threw up the glass.

The refraction of moonlight
through smog-ridden air
Gave a luster of midday to
everything there.

When what to my bionic
eyes should appear
But a mass-driven sleigh with
some strange landing gear.

With a quick little pilot,
a company man,
Who did what was asked and
just
followed the plan.

More rapid than phantoms
his coursers they came.
He impulsed his crewmen,
then called them by name . . .

'Now Redox! Now Hewlett! Now
Quasar
and Photon!



'On Laser! On, Xerox! On Pulsar
and
Proton!

'To the top of the dome, by the
air-intake vent.
Now dash away quickly before
our fuel's spent.

So, up to the air-vent
his coursers they flew,
with a craft full of toys and
Saint Nicholas too.

And then in a flash, on
the dome I did hear
The scratching and scraping
of stout landing gear.

I steadied my blaster,
my chest to the ground.
And then, through the air-vent
he came with a bound.

He was dressed in a three-piece
he'd rented near here.
(Why purchase an outfit you
wear once a year?)

A life-support system
he wore on his back,
while toys for the androids
he took from his pack.

He brought out the toys that
department stores sell –
The elves at the pole could not
make them so well.

He checked with the base ship
while doing his work,
And filled all the test tubes,
then turned with a jerk.

His antigrav belt was
secure, I suppose –
and, pressing the keys, up
the air vent he rose.

He sprang to his craft, gave
a shout to the crew.
The ship heaved a shudder,
and skywards they flew.

But I heard him exclaim,
as he flew out of sight,
'Merry Christmas to all,
and to all a good flight.'

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! To you Lloyd and all at CRASH . . .
Peter Young, Lancashire

I've had to change some lines to fit it all in, but I'm really no poet – I can't make them scan or rhyme at all.

LM

COMPLAIN, WHINGE, GROAN

Dear Lloyd
This is my first letter I've sent to CRASH and I'm glad to say I'm not going to complain (simply because there's nothing to complain about).

In fact I'm going to do quite the opposite. Every month I read complaints about CRASH, but why? If you look through any magazine there's going to be at least one thing you don't like. My message to people that criticise CRASH is 'save your paper, Lloyd's heard it all before'.
David Whitlam, Cheshire

ONE THING YOU DON'T LIKE????? Step outside and say that! (But thanks for the letter really – it's nice to know someone's still rational out there.)

LM

HE MUST BE MAD

Dear Mr Anagram (sounds better, eh?)
I would like to congratulate *Your Sinclair* on being the best magazine around, but I can't because CRASH is.

Creeping and crawling apart, here is the point of my letter. There. Did you see it? It was cunningly disguised as a full stop. No? Well I'll kill it then. (SPLURRRGGGHHHH!) And now folks, the moment you've all been waiting for, my top ten favourite computer games!!

☆ Pot Noodle
☆ Kit Kat
☆ Cadbury's Fudge
☆ Chocolate milk shake
☆ Pedigree Chum?!!?

Did you spot the three deliberate mistakes? They're all foods, not games; there are only five of them, not ten; only dogs and *Coronation Street* fans eat Pedigree Chum!

Ah yes, before the hand grenades inside my feet blow up, I would like to congratulate Oli Frey on being the best, most radicasualistical artist in the whole wide Multiverse. (Now I know that you'll be sitting there in your designer armchair saying 'Ha! His titchy opinion doesn't mean very much', but it does, so there. And Oli is still cool after all that.)

Still on this subject, Oli doesn't get enough praise or publicity so I've started a fan club for him. It is called Oli Rules In British Lands Everywhere (ORIBLE for short).

Alas, as they say in all the best cartoons 'TH-th-th-th-that's all folks!'
Brian McConnell, Scotland

My armchair is something of an heirloom and dates back to long before this ridiculous word 'designer' was invented.

LM

ARE THEY BY ANY CHANCE RELATED ?

Dear Lloyd
I haven't got much to say, I was just wondering if you had noticed any similarities between the Electric Dreams logo and Disneyland's *Captain Eo* thingymajig.
Andrew Mcgregor, Isle of Man

PS Hi, Merry Christmas, Happy Birthday etc to Chris, Kieran, Simon, Karl, James and everyone else at RGS who is reading.

Not until now.

LM



▲ **Disneyland's Captain Eo thingymajig**



▲ **The Electric Dreams logo**

Now if I was Nick Roberts, I'd swallow a last mouthful and say 'that's it for another rad, hip, trendy, with-it Forum' . . . or whatever it is people say these days.

But I'm not – I'm Lloyd Mangram, and I get by with a little help from my granny and a *lot* from you. This month I've had one of the best postbags since the great days of '86, and it seems like good times are back in town again.

Goodness, I am slipping into that pseudocool Nick Roberts style, aren't I? Time to go before the wind changes and I'm stuck like this . . . keep writing to:

LLOYD MANGRAM'S FAB'N'BRILL FORUM
CRASH
PO BOX 10
LUDLOW
SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

(On second thoughts, leave out the 'fab'n'brill' bit – grandma probably thinks they're soap powders and she'll pester me to buy some. Shopping on a bike isn't easy!)

Don't forget that each month's top letter wins £30 worth of software – the winner's choice.



THE READER STRIKES BACK

Despite his recent defection to THE GAMES MACHINE magazine, Robin Candy remains willing to keep his commitment to a CRASH Challenge, if only to help obscure memories of his poor performance in the Intermagazine Challenge. His chosen game was *The Empire Strikes Back* (90%, Issue 54). Careful study has given Robin some good ideas for tactics, but has he spent enough time practising what he preaches?

The morn of the challenge begins as peacefully as one would expect of Ludlow – just a few, rattling delivery trucks and the odd low-flying, American bomber to disturb a weary reviewer's slumber. Once inside CRASH Towers, however, everything changes. There blood, sweat and tears are being shed in abundant quantities and the Towers resonate with howls of woe. Has Robin been defeated so quickly, so easily? No, a quick check with the Production Manager reveals the hideous truth; it's the six-monthly Towers' office shuffle in progress. Desk, chairs and even the complete set of CRASH binders all have to be heaved from the first to the third floors. The narrow, twisting staircase is packed as this elaborate game of Musical Offices begins. Robin Candy heroically, or stupidly, ends up at the wrong place, at the wrong time – eg at the rear end of a 12-ton photocopier going down the stairs backwards. Against all the odds Robin survives and seems glad to head off for some classes at college.

When Robin returns CRASH is 'installed' in its new offices with exhausted staff slumped in their chairs, surrounded by years of clutter. Not until 4:30pm was a Spectrum's distinctive voice to be heard, burbling along with *The Empire Strikes Back* tunes. With a worried look in his eye Robin paced between the corpses, murmuring: 'I could lose this, you know. I haven't had time to practise'. But it's getting late now, and maybe the challenger won't arrive after all . . .

NO SUCH LUCK

At 4:50pm the sophisticated security system (which periodically locks us out) announces



the arrival of Daniel 'No jokes please' Trigger, 14 years. Trigger hails from Bromsgrove and wears a sweatshirt embroidered with an ad for his fanzine *Comp.* A copy of said fanzine is handed out, complete with cover-mounted cassette – 'The game's rubbish but it gets in the punters' remarks the young wannabe Rupert Murdoch.



Robin, by contrast, wears some ultra-trendy cycling gear with the legend 'on yer bike'. Dark shades and a shoulder-mounted Olibug complete the image. Unfortunately Robin's legendary cool seems to be wearing a little thin. The problem is a lack of suitable backing music. Lacking the Pet Shop Boys Robin'll have to put up with The Christians, which isn't bad, but the One In A Million track is a real downer apparently. The Comps Minion is put in charge of flipping the tape if it should come up.

Young Daniel quickly gets set up at a Spectrum with his Cheetah 125 joystick, but Robin's still moaning – his favourite joystick's broken and he can't find just the right replacement. The Comps Minion suggests a Sinclair joystick to loud laughter. Finally Robin selects a joystick but can't find exactly the right 'crucial distance' from the monitor. Clearly nettled by the delays Daniel murmurs that maybe Robin should 'get crucially into the game' . . .

And into battle they went . . .

The stopwatch is started and both competitors instantly press fire, but must then endure the slow intro where Darth Vader's Star Destroyer crosses the screen. Once into the action Robin's tactics become obvious – get his snowspeeder through the probots as fast as possible by not bothering with the radio transmissions, then earn massive bonuses by trick-flying, zooming between the AT-ATs legs on the walkers section. Daniel, by contrast, only attempts to fly under one or two



AT-AT's. He's aiming for the massive end of level point bonuses and tries to avoid any unnecessary risks. Given that each game will only last ten minutes, not enough time to complete more than a few levels, Robin's tactics seem clearly superior – if he has sufficient skill to carry them out.

At just 257 points Robin loses his first life on the very first AT-AT, weary CRASH onlookers exchange nervous glances. Robin persists with his tactics however, racking up huge trick-flying bonuses, but loses yet more lives at 75370 points, then 140429 and 180840. After changing into the Millenium Falcon Robin survives the attack of wave after wave of TIE fighters then skilfully navigates the asteroid field. At the end of the first level Robin has 435230, almost double Daniel's 285757. But Daniel's earned a Jedi bonus and is invulnerable until it runs out, and on top of that he's yet to lose a life.

Battle begins on the next level and shortly afterwards the six-minute mark is announced. 'Oh no,' Robin cries in horror, 'I've got to survive four minutes with no shields!' Daniel smiles to himself and unsympathetically jokes 'Well die then'. Robin bravely struggles on a further one minute, 26 seconds before dying with 441475 points. Daniel plays on with the luxury of three shields, but a minute later his score is still a relatively lowly 306751. Attacking the walkers he loses a shield, but easily gets on to the TIE fighter section. As he enters the asteroid field with thirty seconds to go Robin is still well ahead on score. 'Gotta get to the end of this wave . . . pleeese!' Daniel pleads. He gets there exactly on the ten minute mark and his 564652 score makes him the winner of the first round.

FINAL SCORE:
DARTH CANDY 441475
HAN TRIGGER 564652

ROUND TWO

The reason for Robin's 'mysterious' loss is soon discovered, however – his cassette player was on MONO! Reinvigorated by this discovery Robin takes off his shades and bangs on his Communards tape. Once again both players start on Level Three – the top difficulty level – and are quickly engaged in blasting probots. Robin sticks to his tactics and is soon at the walkers, going for the trick-flying bonuses: 5000 points for the first AT-AT, 10000 for the second and so on. Robin loses three lives in the walker section, but his final bonus is a massive 40000 points. All those points add up and by the time he enters the asteroids section his score is 180772, but only one shield is left. By contrast Daniel has just 19157. After end of level bonuses and with five minutes left to go Robin has 440671 compared to Daniel's 290825. With two minutes remaining Robin, still with just one shield, is groaning that going through the TIEs is 'doody'. As Daniel struggles to match Robin's score his Spectrum promptly crashes. But as Robin wants to go swimming at six prompt we allow his turn to continue. At the end of ten minutes he's on to Level Five with a humongous 710194 points.

FINAL SCORE:
DARTH CANDY 710194
HAN TRIGGER crashed and burned



ROUND THREE?

Since Daniel will have an opportunity of beating Robin's second score later this is the third round for both players. Robin puts on The Smith's *Girlfriend In A Coma*. He loses his first life at 145 points in the walker level, at 5145 another life is lost. By the time he's reached the asteroid field he's got 13884 and three shields, but no competitor. Daniel's Spectrum has crashed again. Once again we let Robin play on. Robin completes Level Three with 263970, but is soon losing lives again at the walker section. At the seven minute mark Robin is down to no shields, still, he flies through the asteroid field without a collision and earns his end of level bonus. A few seconds into the probot section, however, and he makes a fatal miscalculation. With a massive probot's head filling the screen Robin's game has ended on 596541 points, a minute and a half still to run.

NOT-VERY-FINAL SCORE:
DARTH CANDY 596541
HAN TRIGGER crashed and burned (again!)

NOT DEAD YET!

As Robin leaves, Daniel transfers his joystick to Robin's Spectrum to restart his second game. To win the round and the game Daniel must beat 710194. He gets off to a brilliant start with, for him, lots of risky trick-flying on the first level. He earns 142363 without using a single tow cable, but things start to go wrong in Space and two lives are lost to the TIE fighters. At the end of the level he's got a very healthy 405708, though, and a Jedi bonus. Once the bonus wears out he is soon reduced to just one shield due to heavy flak in the walker section. Yet another shield is lost in the asteroid fields and despite a very brave effort his final score of 678778 just isn't good enough. Robin is given round two and the challenge is all square.

ROUND TWO:
HAN TRIGGER 678778

As game three begins Robin returns, having decided to stick around. He isn't noticeably cheered by his second round victory realising it's his third score which is the vulnerable one.

Daniel knows this as well and changes tactics accordingly. Everything onscreen is quickly blasted and there are no attempts at any risky trick-flying. Unfortunately these eminently sensible, safe tactics result in the loss of a life. Confidence rattled Daniel loses another in the



TIE section but survives the level to boost his score to 270843 – over halfway there. Wave four is begun with the Jedi bonus and once Daniel enters the walkers section he reverts to former tactics with some nifty trick-flying. No lives are lost there, but a pop-up attack from a TIE takes another shield later. Daniel fights through to the end of the level, however, and the bonus makes him the winner with 607904. His final score of 609387 only confirms his victory and Robin's defeat . . .

ROUND THREE:
HAN TRIGGER 609387

Ah well, Robin is on the TGM staff now.

Watch out for Mark 'The Merciless' Caswell in the next enthralling encounter in The CRASH Challenge (showing nightly at a cinema near you!).



Dear Mark

Word has it that you're pretty hot at Activision's sky-scorcher *Afterburner*. Well, to be honest with you, I reckon I'm a million times better than you! Don't believe me, eh? Well I was playing the old fuel guzzler last night and managed to amount a mediocre (for me, anyway) . And by the time of the challenge I'll be even better. The gauntlet is thrown . . . !

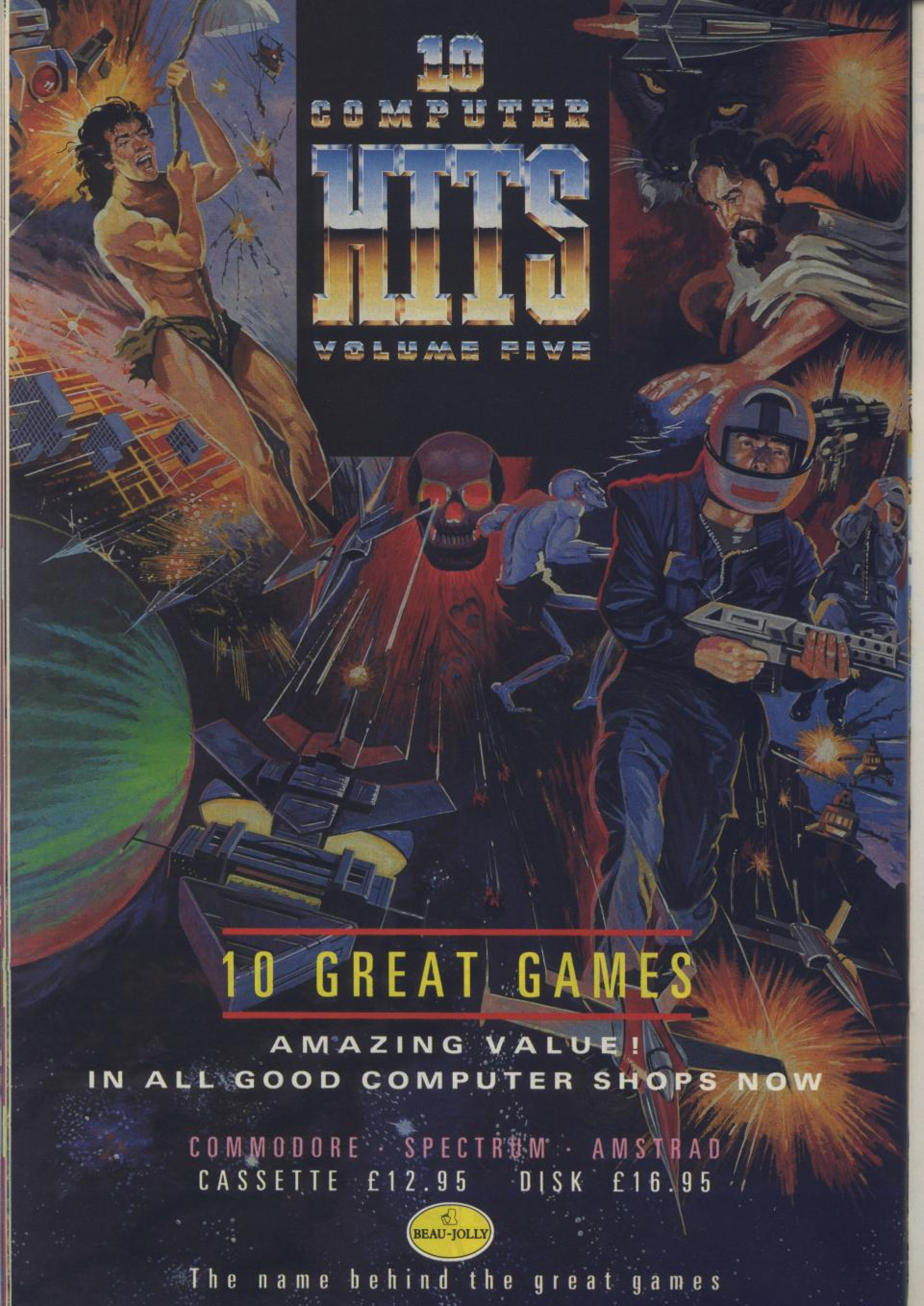
NAME .... AGE ....

ADDRESS ....

.... POSTCODE ....

☎ ....

Just send your form off to The Burning Challenge, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Don't be surprised if you are summoned!


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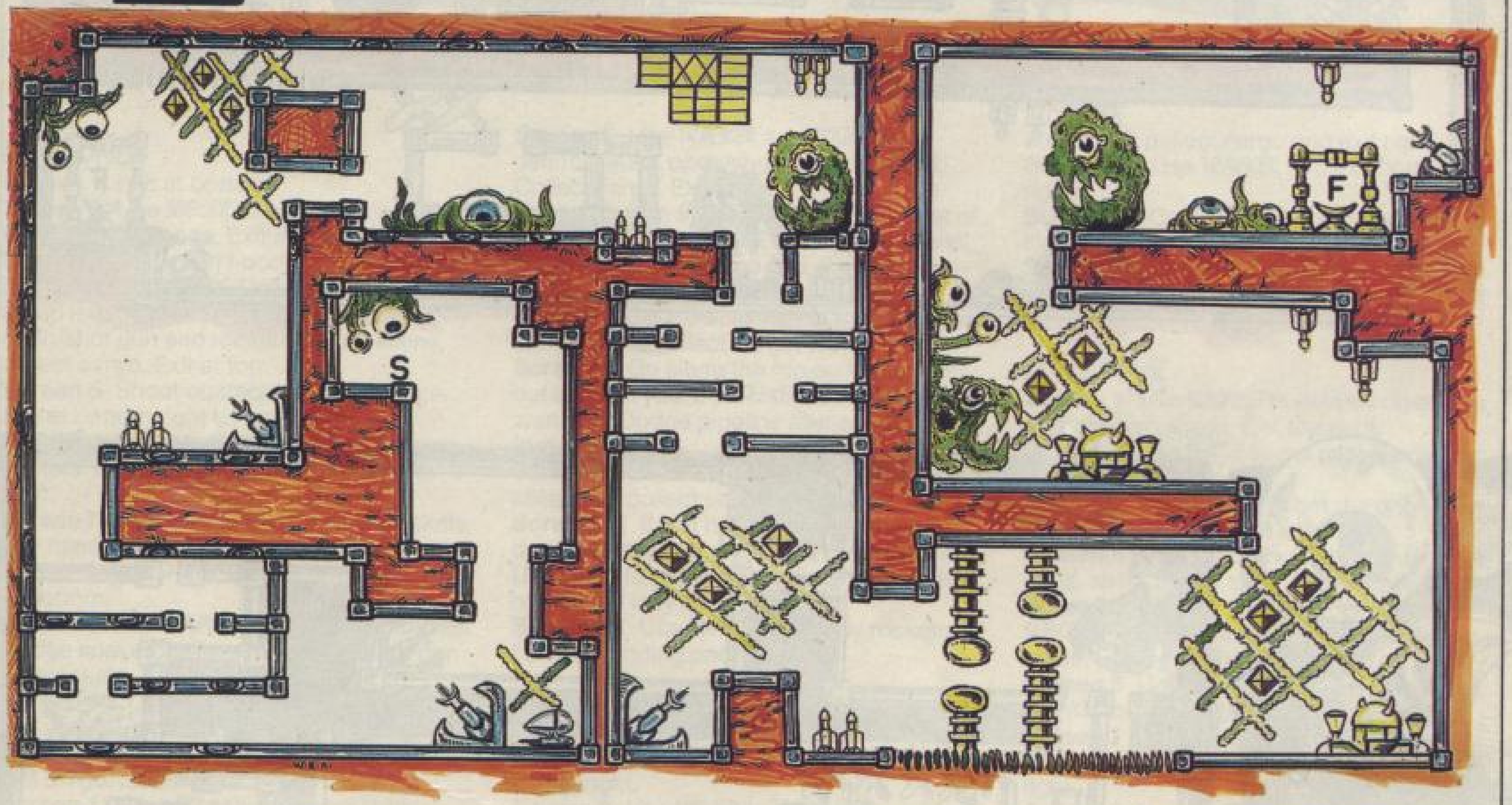
Nick Roberts's

PLAYING TIPS

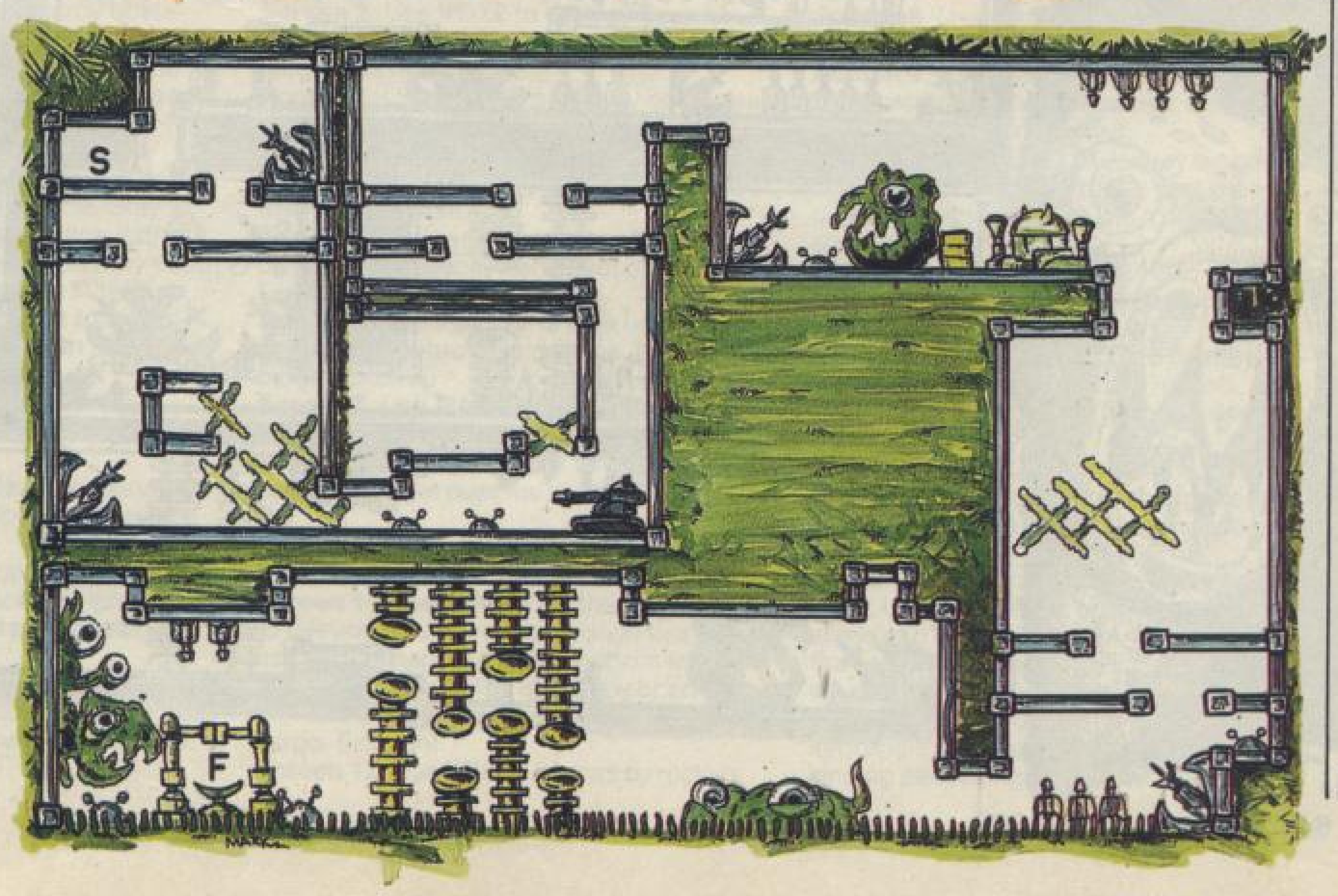


GOING CYBERNETIC

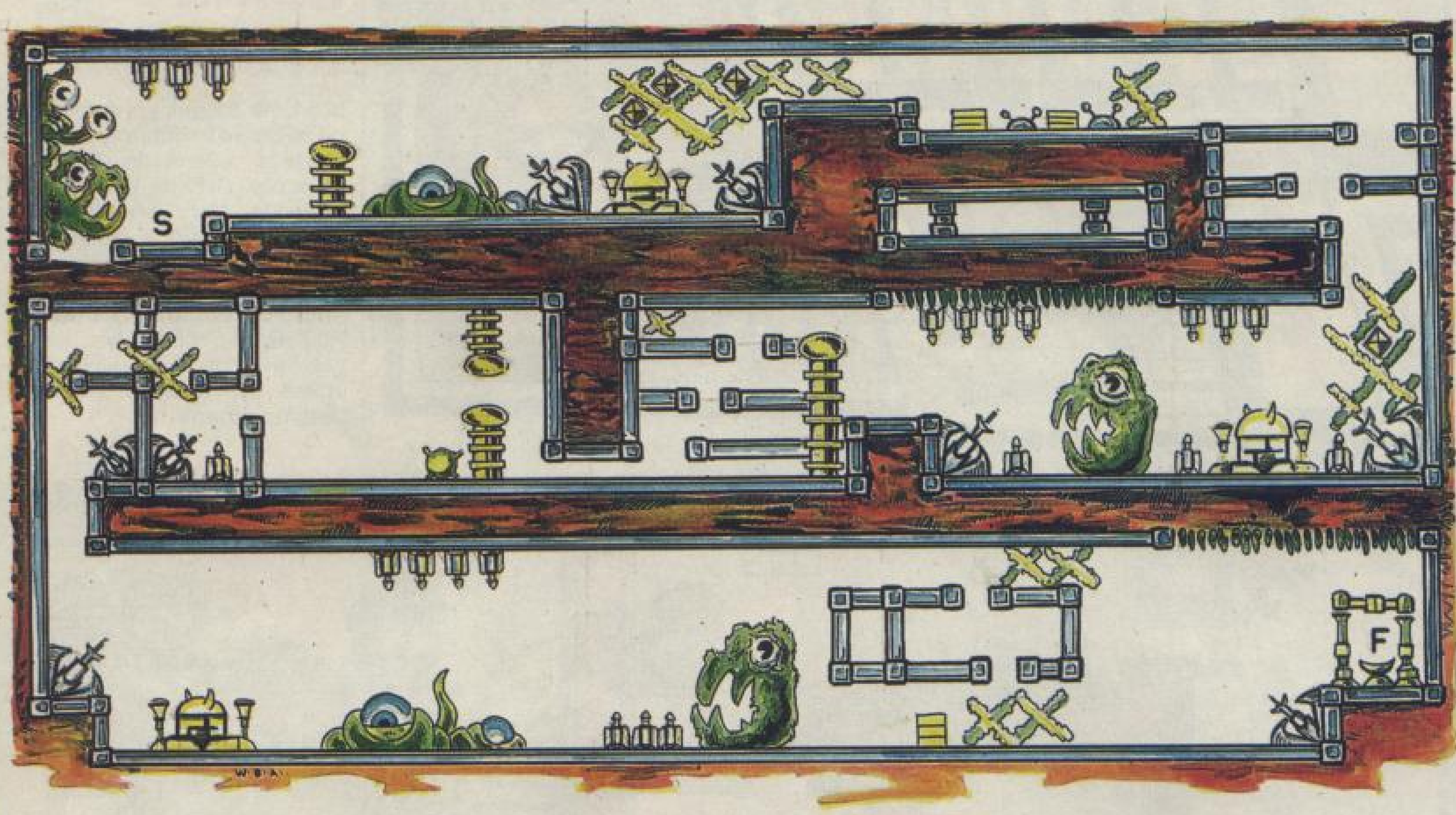
It's time to get your revenge on all those irritatingly fast and fearless aliens in Raffaele Cecco's *Cybernoid II – The Revenge*. **Here are maps of each level and a screen-by-screen guide to help you along. They're all from three intrepid arcade gamesters** Paul Roper, Matthew Thomas **and** Ian Roper **who will have to share the £40 of software between them.**



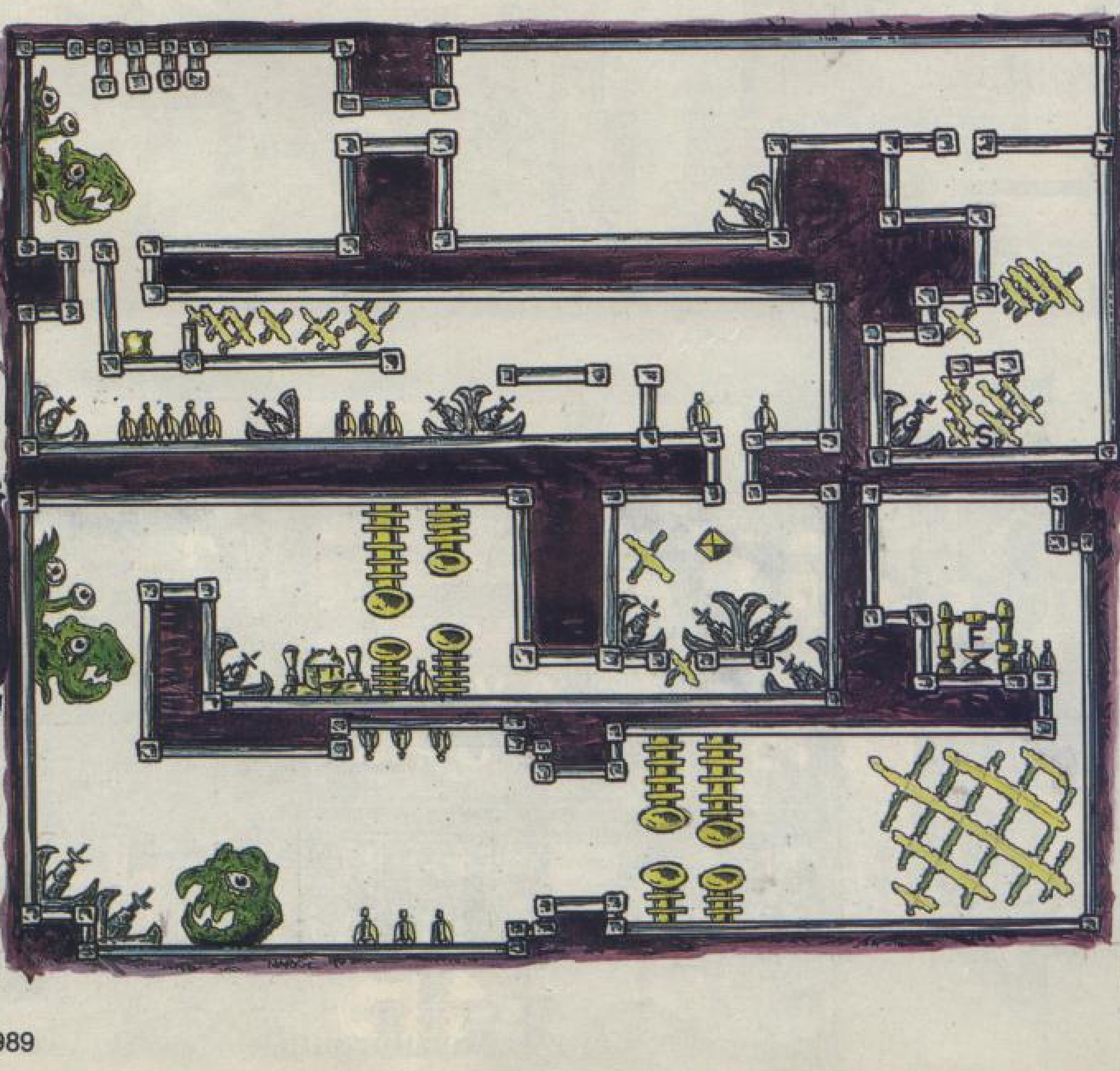
CYBERNOID 2



▶


S
F




S
F

CYBERNOID 2

LEVEL ONE

Screen 1 Exit at bottom
Screen 2 Use *SEEKER* to blow up the open/shut gun. Get mace. Exit at bottom left.
Screen 3 If you can't dodge the pipeline aliens then use *SHIELDS*. Collect back gun. Exit at top left. **Screen 4** Use *BOUNCE* to destroy open/shut gun and rockets. Shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit at top.
Screen 5 Shoot obstacles, collect mace. Exit at bottom right tunnel.
Screen 6 Use mace or *BOUNCE* to destroy rockets. Shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit right.
Screen 7 Use *SMART BOMB* to destroy rockets and head. Exit at bottom.
Screen 8 Use *SHIELD*, collect cargo pod. Exit at bottom.
Screen 9 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles. Dodge snakes, bullets from open/shut gun and rockets. Exit at bottom right.
Screen 10 Use *SHIELD* just before the snake hits you, go through the pipeline, dodge snake and destroy rockets and aliens. Collect cargo. Exit at right.
Screen 11 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles. Use cargo pod to fill up *SHIELD*. Shoot aliens and collect cargo. Exit at top right.
Screen 12 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy aliens and rockets. Collect cybermace and cargo. Exit left.
Screen 13 Go as far up as possible, use *SEEKER* to destroy the big obstacle. Stay at top, shoot your way to the exit (top left).
Screen 14 Use *SMART BOMB* to destroy head and rockets, collect mace. Use *BOUNCE*, shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit top right.
Screen 15 Use *SEEKER* on rocket and open/shut gun. Land on pad.

LEVEL TWO

Screen 1 Use *SEEKER* to destroy open/shut gun. If you can't destroy pipeline aliens then use *SHIELD*. Exit at bottom.
Screen 2 Use *SEEKER* on open/shut gun. Shoot obstacles. Exit at bottom right.
Screen 3 Use *SHIELD* to get past indestructible gun. Exit at top right.
Screen 4 Shoot three of the obstacles on the bottom, shoot all obstacles in the middle. If you can't get past pipeline then use *SHIELD*. Exit at top right.
Screen 5 Use *TRACKER* and *BOUNCE* to destroy head, open/shut gun and aliens. Collect cargo. Exit right.
Screen 6 Use *SMART BOMB* but keep clear of big obstacle. Use *BOUNCE* to destroy aliens, collect cargo and cargo pod. Exit at the bottom.
Screen 7 Dodge snakes, collect weapons, shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit at bottom.
Screen 8 Go along the top so rockets fire but don't hit you. Use *SEEKER* to destroy open/shut gun. Dodge pipeline aliens. Exit at bottom left.
Screen 9 Use *BOUNCE* Dodge snake. Shoot aliens and collect cargo. Exit left.
Screen 10 If you have the mace then destroy the rocket. If you don't, use a *SEEKER*. Use *SHIELD* to get through pipeline if you are not feeling very daring. Exit left.
Screen 11 Use *BOMBS* to destroy rockets. Land on landing pad.

LEVEL THREE

Screen 1 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy rockets. Exit at right.
Screen 2 Use *SEEKER* to destroy open/shut gun and use *BOUNCE* to destroy aliens, collect cargo. Exit right.
Screen 3 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles and collect weapons. Exit top right.
Screen 4 Use *SHIELD* to get past indestructible gun, collect cargo pods, shoot obstacles then exit top right.
Screen 5 Dodge snake and use *SHIELD* to get past pipeline aliens, then shoot obstacles. Exit bottom right.
Screen 6 Use *SMART BOMB* then use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles and aliens. Collect cargo. Exit left.
Screen 7 Use *TRACKER* then *BOUNCE*, shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit left.
Screen 8 Don't shoot any of the obstacles, use *SHIELD* to get past the aliens. Exit bottom left.
Screen 9 Try to dodge the aliens, if you die, then use *SHIELD* and collect mace. Exit left.
Screen 10 Use *SMART BOMB* then use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles. Go through tunnels, use *SHIELD* if necessary. Exit bottom left.
Screen 11 Use *SEEKER* to destroy open/shut gun and big obstacles. Shoot aliens, collect cargo. Exit right.
Screen 12 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy rockets and aliens, collect cargo and exit right.
Screen 13 Use *TRACKER* and exit bottom right.
Screen 14 Collect cargo pod, shoot obstacles. Exit right.
Screen 15 Use *SEEKER* to destroy open/shut gun. Land on pad.

LEVEL FOUR

Screen 1 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy obstacles and open/shut gun. Exit top right.
Screen 2 Use *SHIELD* to get past aliens. Exit top left.
Screen 3 Use *BOUNCE* to get the open/shut gun and the aliens. Exit left.
Screen 4 Use *SEEKER* for both open/shut guns, shoot aliens, get cybermace. Exit left.
Screen 5 Destroy first two rockets with *SEEKERS*. Try to get the back gun and cybermace. Exit bottom right.
Screen 6 Collect weapons and cargo, use *BOUNCE* for the obstacles. Exit top right.
Screen 7 Use *SHIELD*. Shoot obstacles but don't bother with the open/shut gun. Exit top right.
Screen 8 Use *BOMBS* on rockets, dodge aliens. Exit at middle bottom.
Screen 9 Use *SMART BOMB*. Don't shoot first two obstacles but shoot the rest. Dodge the snakes and exit bottom left.
Screen 10 Use *SEEKER* to destroy big obstacle. Now use the *SHIELD* to get past the pipeline aliens. Shoot aliens, collect cargo and exit left.
Screen 11 Use the *SMART BOMB* to destroy the open/shut gun and rockets. Dodge the bullets and exit bottom left.
Screen 12 Use the *TRACKER* to destroy the head, open/shut gun and the rockets. Then use *BOUNCE* to destroy the aliens. Collect the cargo and exit right.
Screen 13 Use *BOUNCE* to destroy the aliens and rockets. If you haven't enough cargo points then now's your last change to get some. Exit middle right.
Screen 14 Use the *SEEKER* to destroy the head. Use *SHIELD* to get past the pipeline aliens and snake. Exit right.
Screen 15 Use the *BOUNCE* to destroy the small obstacles. Exit top right.
Screen 16 Use *TRACKER* to destroy the rockets and the open/shut gun. Land on the landing pad. Congratulations!

THE TEFAL SET

No, this isn't a new tea set that I had for Christmas, it's some POKEs from The Tefal Men – the hackers from the kitchenware department of your local store. To kick off the New Year they've sent in infinite lives for *Impact* and *2088*, infinite balls on *Advanced Pinball Simulator*, infinite lives and invincibility on *Dynatron Mission* plus infinite lives, ammo and fuel for *Terrorpods*.

DYNATRON MISSION

```
1  REM DYNATRON
   MISSION HACK
2  REM BY THE TEFAL
   MEN
3  REM (MEL & STE)
4  REM JUST DELETE THE
   POKES YOU DON'T
   WANT
10 PAPER 0: INK 0
20 CLEAR 24575
30 LOAD ""SCREEN$
40 PRINT AT 10,0
50 LOAD ""CODE
60 POKE 41629,0: REM INF
   LIVES
70 POKE 41686,201: REM
   INVINCIBLE
80 PRINT USR 44930
```

TERRORPODS

```
1  REM TERRORPODS
   HACK
2  REM BY THE TEFAL
   MEN
3  REM (MEL & STE)
10 CLEAR 30207
20 BORDER 0: PAPER 0:
   INK 0
30 LOAD ""CODE 16384
40 LOAD ""CODE
50 REM INFINITE LIVES
51 POKE 62305,36: POKE
   62792,0
60 REM INFINITE AMMO
61 POKE 64516,201
70 REM INFINITE FUEL
71 POKE 63347,36
80 RANDOMIZE USR
   47872
```

ADVANCED PINBALL SIMULATOR

```
1   REM ADVANCED
    PINBALL SIMULATOR
    HACK
2   REM BY THE TEFAL
    MEN
3   REM (MEL & STE)
4   REM MF1 POKE 35237,0
10  LET T=0
20  LET W=0
30  FOR F=30000 TO 30036
40  READ A
50  POKE F,A
60  LET T=T+W*A
70  LET W=W+1
80  NEXT F
90  IF T<>71828 THEN
    PRINT "DATA ERROR":
    STOP
100 RANDOMIZE USR
    30000
110 DATA 17, 0, 1, 221, 33, 0,
    96
120 DATA 62, 255, 55, 205, 86
130 DATA 5, 212, 48, 117
140 DATA 33, 78, 117, 17, 91,
    96
150 DATA 1, 7, 0, 237, 176
160 DATA 195, 0, 96
170 DATA 175, 50, 165, 137
180 DATA 195, 124, 134
```

IMPACT

```
1  REM IMPACT HACK
2  REM BY THE TEFAL
   MEN
3  REM (MEL & STE)
10 CLEAR 60780
20 LOAD ""SCREEN$
30 LOAD ""CODE
40 LOAD ""CODE
50 POKE 54500,36
60 RANDOMIZE USR
   48442
```

2088

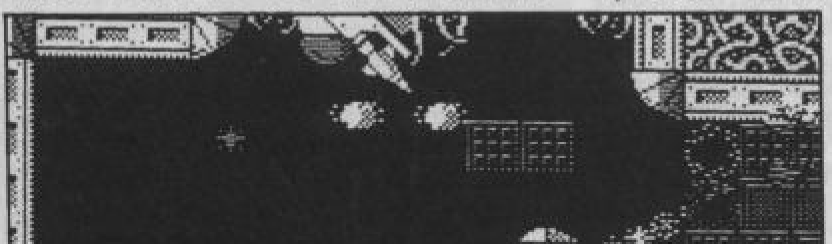
```
1  REM 2088 HACK
2  REM BY THE TEFAL
   MEN
3  REM (MEL & STE)
4  REM MF1 POKE
   41890,36
10 PRINT AT 10,4;"START
   TAPE FROM
   BEGINNING"
20 LOAD ""SCREEN$
30 FOR F=16405 TO 16412
40 READ A
50 POKE F,A
60 NEXT F
70 DATA 62, 36, 50, 162, 163
80 DATA 195, 0, 128
90 RANDOMIZE USR
   16384
```

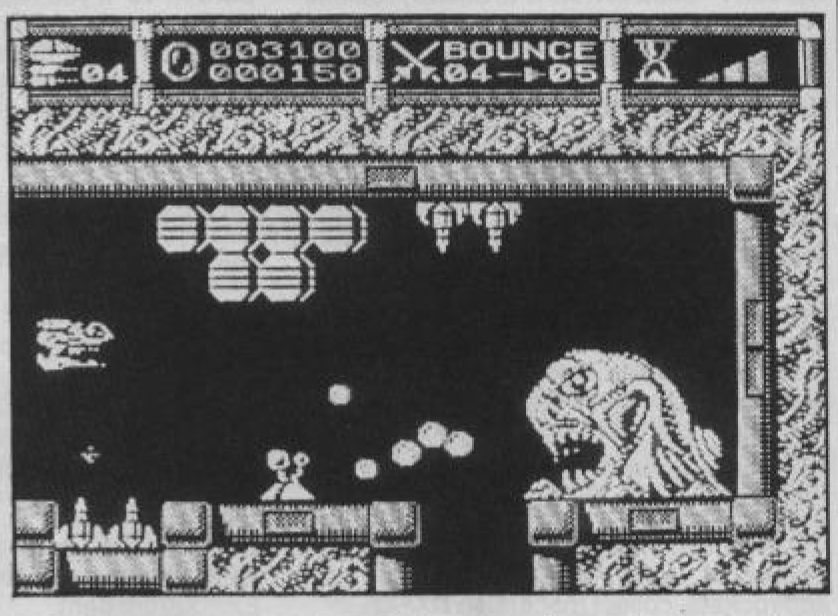
THE FLYING FINN

Fact 1: Paul Flynn **of Merseyside has sent in 46 Multiface POKEs on only three games!**
Fact 2: **They are for** *Overlander*, *Cybernoid* **and** *Cybernoid II*.
Fact 3: **That is an average of 15.3 POKEs a game.**
Fact 4: **I had my English O-level regraded and passed.**

These Overlander **POKEs let you change the prices of the equipment. To find the number to POKE into the chosen memory location ignore the last two numbers of the price (e.g. $100 becomes 1, $1,000 becomes 10 and $10,000 becomes 100). 0 can be used to make items cost nothing.**

ITEM	128K	48K
Superbrakes	43482	43226
Turbocharger	43484	43228
Leanburner	43486	43230
Battering Ram	43488	43232
Armour Plating	43490	43234
Bullet Proofing	43492	43236
Wheelblades	43494	43238
Flamethrower	43494	43240
Missiles	43498	43242
Smart Bomb	43500	43244
Extra Life	43502	43246





These Cybernoid I & II **POKEs let you change the amount of weapons being carried.**

	CYBERNOID I		CYBERNOID II	
	Present	Maximum	Present	Maximum
Bombs	31672	31673	30310	30311
*Mines	31688	31689	30386	30387
Shield	31704	31705	30403	30404
Bounce	31720	31721	30418	30419
Seeker	31736	31737	30434	30435
Smart			30450	30451
Tracker			30466	30467

*In *Cybernoid II* these are the Time Bombs.

HOWDON HACKERS

A few routines that were left over from the Christmas Special were these from The Howdon Hackers. There are handy hacks for *Pro BMX Simulator*, *Metaplex*, *Blade Warrior* and *Intensity*.

METAPLEX

```
10  REM METAPLEX HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
21  REM INFINITE SHIELD,
    LASER, ACID (TANK)
    AND ACID (FLASK)
30  CLEAR 25298
40  LET T=7810
50  FOR F=65410 TO 65476
60  READ A: POKE F,A
70  LET T=T-A
80  NEXT F
90  IF T<>0 THEN STOP
100 LOAD ""CODE 65000
110 POKE 23659,0
120 RANDOMIZE USR
    65410
130 DATA 33, 179, 255, 17,
    235, 253
140 DATA 1, 13, 0, 237, 176,
    33, 24
150 DATA 4, 34, 27, 254, 33,
    156
160 DATA 255, 34, 96, 254,
    195, 248
170 DATA 253, 151, 50, 11,
    155, 50
180 DATA 170, 143, 198, 183,
    50
190 DATA 247, 154, 198, 18,
    50, 184
200 DATA 142, 50, 250, 187,
    195, 64
210 DATA 130, 64, 130, 56,
    132, 134
220 DATA 153, 132, 17, 45,
    153, 56
230 DATA 2, 24, 127, 72, 72,
    56, 56
```

INTENSITY

```
10  REM INTENSITY HACK
20  REM HOWDON
    HACKERS'88
30  REM INFINITE
    DRONES, SKIMMERS
    AND R.U.S
40  CLEAR 32767
50  LET T=556605: LET
    W=105
60  FOR F=32768 TO 32872
70  READ A: POKE F,A
80  LET T=T-W*A: LET
    W=W-1
90  NEXT F
100 IF T<>0 THEN STOP
110 LOAD ""CODE 52480
120 RANDOMIZE USR
    32768
130 DATA 49, 179, 95, 33, 0,
    205
140 DATA 17, 212, 128, 6, 2,
    237
150 DATA 176, 62, 195, 33,
    27, 128
160 DATA 50, 34, 129, 34, 35,
    129
170 DATA 195, 212, 128, 122,
    254
180 DATA 46, 221, 33, 62,
    205, 126
190 DATA 40, 6, 33, 239, 128,
    195
200 DATA 37, 129, 230, 7, 60,
    50
210 DATA 21, 255, 33, 64,
    128, 62
220 DATA 195, 50, 50, 93, 34,
    51
230 DATA 93, 20, 195, 0, 93,
    33
240 DATA 87, 128, 17, 187,
    93, 1
250 DATA 20, 0, 237, 176, 62,
    31
260 DATA 50, 50, 93, 237, 67,
    50
270 DATA 93, 195, 50, 93,
    151, 50
280 DATA 78, 124, 50, 177,
    129
290 DATA 246, 82, 50, 208,
    124
300 DATA 195, 0, 240, 127,
    72, 72
```

PRO BMX SIMULATOR

Type out this main listing with the line numbers exactly as printed.

```
10  REM PRO. BMX SIM.
    HACK
20  REM MAIN BLOCK
30  REM HOWDON HAC-
    KERS'88
31  REM ONLY 1 LAP TO DO
    AND INFINITE TIME
40  CLEAR 64999
50  FOR F=65000 TO 65046
60  READ A: POKE F,A
70  NEXT F
80  RANDOMIZE USR
    65000
90  DATA 55, 159, 221, 33, 0,
    95
100 DATA 17, 0, 1, 205, 86, 5
110 DATA 48, 242, 33, 4, 254,
    17
120 DATA 118, 95, 1, 20, 0,
    237
130 DATA 176, 195, 0, 95, 62,
    24
160 DATA 127, 72, 72, 56, 56
```

Now all you have to do is add one of these data lines, depending on whether you are playing the standard or expert versions of the game.

STANDARD

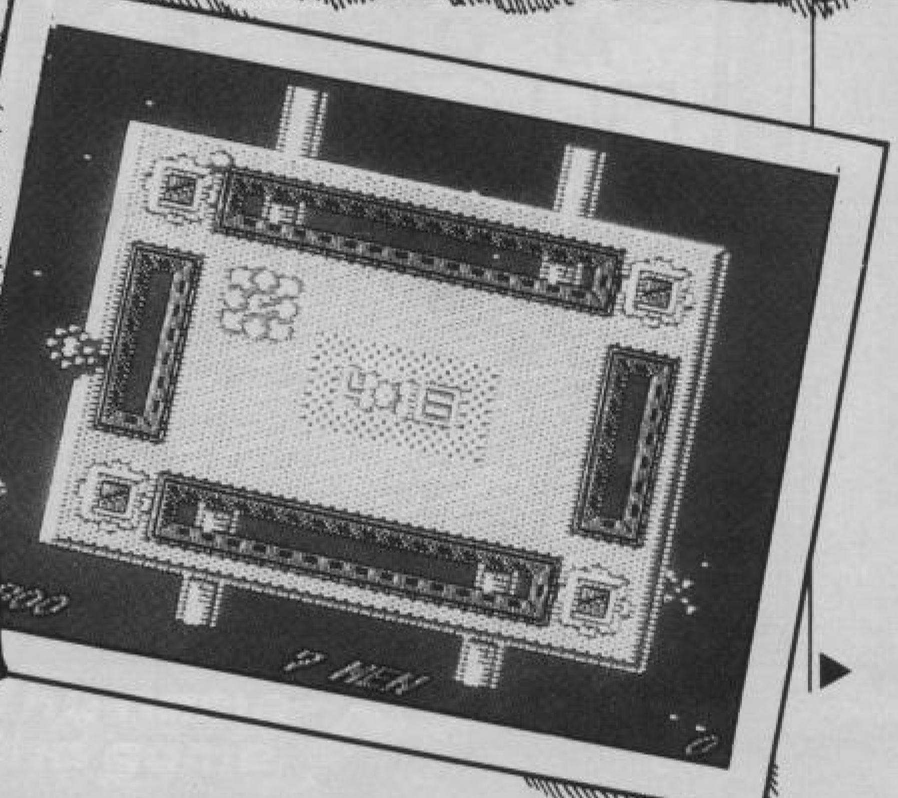
```
140 DATA 50, 231, 140, 33,
    62, 49
150 DATA 34, 179, 144, 195,
    0, 96
```

EXPERT

```
140 DATA 50, 8, 141, 33, 62,
    49
150 DATA 34, 212, 144, 195,
    0, 96
```

BLADE WARRIOR

```
10  REM BLADE WARRIOR
    HACK
20  REM HOWDON HAC-
    KERS'88
21  REM INFINITE MEN
    AND TIME
30  CLEAR 63999
40  FOR F=64000 TO 64031
50  READ A: POKE F,A
60  NEXT F
70  RANDOMIZE USR
    64000
80  DATA 243, 49, 0, 0, 221,
    33
90  DATA 0, 64, 17, 16, 163,
    55
100 DATA 159, 205, 86, 5, 48
110 DATA 242, 151, 50, 41,
    145
120 DATA 246, 182, 50, 66,
    154
130 DATA 195, 0, 128, 72, 72
```



NINJA NAUGHTINESS

Heeh, whaa, yaaa! Nope, I haven't gone mad, I was just practising my ninja skills for these tips on System 3's *Last Ninja 2*. I thought that because System 3 have put so much work into the game it would be a bit unfair to print all the solutions that have been sent in yet, so here are some tips from Paul Dique **of Abingdon – bit weird, though.**

Level 1 – Central Park

★ To open the trap door, move next door and punch where X marks the spot.
★ The key opens the park gate.
★ To find the shuriken, beat up the cop guarding a box, press P at the box.
★ To find the staff. Climb a fence, jump some gaps and press P at the cross.
★ To find the nunchuka search both of the ladies toilets.

Level 2 – The Streets

★ Remember the highway code.
★ Search doors for a really grate key.
★ To find the bottle, look outside the drug store.
★ To find the sword find the boarded up door and kick it down. But be prepared for a surprise!
★ Stuck for an exit? Make a grate exit with your key and head underground.

Level 3 – The Sewers

★ Find a key and a grate then head downwards.
★ For the first set of three doors take the third.
★ For the second set take the middle.
★ To get past the croc, wait until he is clear of the door and go behind him.

Level 4 – The Opium Factory

★ Find a flexible friend on the walkway.
★ Explore the walkway and fight for something Kentucky deep fried.
★ Parcels giving you a hard time? Time your jump.
★ Man on blocks stopping you? Throw a star.
★ Keep an eye on the floor to avoid a shocking experience.
★ Find a full pot and make a red hot opium chicken surprise for a real cool cat.
★ Past the cat but cannot go anywhere? Perhaps an object will access a lift to your spirits.

Those tips should keep you going for a while, more coming soon . . .

MICKEY TAKES THE HINT

If you're a fan of this lovable Disney character and stuck on Gremlin's game then these tips on the sub-games should help you along. They're from Colin Macdonald **in Dundee.**

Puddle Maze
Don't collect the heart when you still have all three lives. To get rid of the skull, collect it with the power pack on (Mickey flickers). To save time go right three times, down once, right three, down one etc.

Bubble Machine
Drop a hammer just before you are above the bubble and if you miss, one after – this way you're guaranteed to hit it. If you want lots of points then wait until the tube is almost empty and go about killing ghosts.

Pump Room
Wait at the right-hand side until you are safe to go up the first ladder. Then go up it, knock in the two corks, go up, then right, put in the cork, wait until it's safe then quickly go along. Put in the corks, then if the force field has gone go right and hit the big monster. If it hasn't, walk left and you will fall down.

Dripping Taps
Try not to get stuck at the bottom. If you're at the top you can get down no matter what way the lift is going. If it's going up, step on it and wait, then you fall down to the next level. Often the ghosts can't go through the lifts, but sometimes . . .

FROGGY FEELINGS

After that brilliant *Draconus* map in the bumper Christmas Special last issue, the perfect item to complement it must be this solution from Guy Rowland **of Bishop's Stortford.**

r, r, r, r, drop down hole, l, r, get morph helix, l, r, u, l, l, l, l, drop off left of stab, d, d, r, d, jump onto platform below, jump at cup to fall onto shield, you will die and return to the start, d, d, d, l, l, l, l, l, drop through hole, change into dragon-newt, l, l, l, change into frognum, l, l, l, jump up using blocks, u, l, get eye, d, d, r, r, r, change into dragon-newt, r, r, change into frognum, u, u, u, u, r, r, r, r, r, r, r, r, r, r, d, r, get staff, l, u, l, l, l, l, d, d, d, l, l, l, l, l, d, change into dragon-newt, l, l, change into frognum, l, l, l, l, l, jump off ledge, r, r, r, r, drop off ledge to the right, drop off ledge to the right, r, r, r, r, r, d, r, get spell, r, r, keep jumping up and firing spells into the monsters head.

CHEAT MODE MOTEL

Oh dear! Never have a New Year's Eve party and leave the tidying up for later. The Motel is looking in a right state after ours. When we finally started clearing up we found Lloyd Mangram hidden under a pile of paper plates, with a bottle of stout in one hand and a sausage roll in the other. Never again, well perhaps not till next year. The cheats don't seem to have been affected by all the mindless drinking and merriment though – they're in a perfect form to start off the New Year.

DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

Before you do the training, select the Kempston joystick (if you've got one don't use it) and start the game off. You should score 60 in the dumb-bells, 190 in the sit ups and 190 in the squats. After this you must redefine the keys, press 2, 3, or 4 on the 128K and load in day 1 and do the same on the 48K.
(occupant: **Colin Shuttleworth**)

RENEGADE

If you press 0 while playing on the 128K version you will skip the level you are on and go on to the next.
(occupant: **Kevin Courtenay**)

BRAINSTORM

Before pressing fire to select 'Play Game', hold 1, 3 and 5 for the editor or 2 and 4 for a game.
(occupant: **Kevin Tracey**)

TARGET; RENEGADE

When loading, type LOAD "": REM TARGET RENEGADE and you will get full energy when swapping levels.
(occupant: **Kelvin Courtenay**)

LAST NINJA 2

Whilst in combat with a baddy hold down the pause key (H) when hitting him – his energy should go straight away.
(occupant: **Steven Ward**)

VOTE FOR THE BEST IN 1988

Computer Leisure Awards

For the first time ever, you will be able to join with the readers of many other British magazines to decide who and what was best in 1988. Awards will be made to software producers resulting from your voting through, this, your own magazine, for what you considered to be the best games you have played on your computer during the past year.

Many other magazines are carrying this voting form. It means the results will truly be democratic, and therefore really mean a lot to those who receive them.

The votes will be collated by an independent company, to whom you should post your voting form, and the awards will be presented at the Computer Leisure Industry's 'get together' — Computer Arena — in March 1989.

So, simply fill-in the voting form below, cut it out (or photocopy it) and send it to:

GAMES OF THE YEAR
MICHAEL BAXTER
SOLUTIONS PR
2 WELLINGTONIA COURT
VARNDEAN ROAD
BRIGHTON BN1 6TD

COMPUTER LEISURE AWARDS 1988 VOTING FORM

1) Please tick the computer format you are voting for:

- AMIGA ☐
- AMSTRAD CPC ☐
- ELECTRON ☐
- COMMODORE 64/128 ☐
- PC COMPATIBLES ☐
- ATARI ST ☐
- SPECTRUM ☐

3) Please state what you consider to be the **BEST GAME OVERALL** of 1988:

4) Which Software House do you choose as being the most consistent in producing high quality computer games during 1988:

2) Please name your choice of best game (from the format ticked above) of 1988:

1. Best ARCADE game

2. Best ADVENTURE game

3. Best STRATEGY/WAR game

4. Best MUSIC with game

5. Best USE OF GRAPHICS

Name ....

Address ....

....

....................**Postcode** ....

ARE YOUR WELLIES FULL OF SNOW? HAS YOUR SPECTRUM GOT FROST BYTE? HAVE YOU JUST READ AN AWFUL PUN? NEVER MIND, YOU COULD STILL BE IN PHIL KING'S

SCORES

Yippee! It's Christmas time again, when a certain plump person (not Nick) climbs down your chimney and leaves loads of presents. But if you're unlucky enough not to have a chimney, you can still get your name into **SCORES** (no chimney needed). In fact you don't even need a mega-high score to qualify – apart from the top score for each game, two humbler efforts are picked at random and printed below it. And if that isn't a big enough incentive, any entry (printed or not) can earn the sender £40 worth of software plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt. Four lucky runners-up also get trendy caps and T-shirts, so don't just sit there; get scoring!

ACTION FORCE II	Virgin
Barry Mepham, Gravesend	6805638
Ricky Wallace, Northolt	116050
Michael Champion, Nottingham	106700

ALIEN SYNDROME	Ace
Mark Thompson, Stockport	730,200
Robert Davies, Nottingham	491,400
Mr S Claus, The North Pole	385,300

ARKANOID – REVENGE OF DOH	Imagine
John Shearman, Stockport	2511760
John Walton, Edinburgh	1830450
Mark Hollins, Southend	1605320

ATF	Digital Integration
Carl Stinson, Belfast	91240
Peter Wiles, Hull	57660
Mark Dingwall, Sunderland	17840

BASKET MASTER	Imagine
Steven Cooper, Middlesborough	118-0
Michael Spencer, Oldham	108-0
Anthony Underwood, Bolton	92-0

BIONIC COMMANDO	GO!
James Armstrong, Tonbridge	1157670
Paul Robinson, Leicester	299394
James Cane, Middlesborough	210570

COBRA	Ocean
Thomas Fahey, Putney	1325560
Jonathan Webb, Sunderland	187900
Andrew Wreford, Heavitree	47050

COMBAT SCHOOL	Ocean
Neil Innes, Musselburgh	978000
Robert Knowles, Mansfield	899800
Ying Wah Wu, Birmingham	792700

CYBERNOID	Hewson
James Baldock, Waterbeach	999813
Peter Henderson, Shetland	72808
Stefan Ratcliffe, Battersea	63569

DARK SIDE	Incentive
Chris Burnell, Barnsley	5485470
Graham Allison, Stoke-On-Trent	5400370
Tim Rollett, Leeds	31900

ENDURO RACER	Activision
Neil Innes, Musselburgh	8932995
Noel Doyle, Dublin, EIRE	7314827
Ian Tomlinson, West Wickham	2980158

FIREFLY	Ocean/Special FX
Steven Bowman, Reading	1150560
Derek Jones, Swansea	645230
Terry Donaldson, Norwich	496780

FLYING SHARK	Firebird
Philip White, Brockworth	1447920
Gareth Thomas, Llanidloes	998480
Nick Poole, Romford	576230

GRYZOR	Imagine
Simon Case, Ormskirk	992941
Colin Thornton, Ipswich	576100
Matthew Holden, Keswick	166900

IK+	System 3
Dean Leahy, London	936520
Martin Pratt, Angmering	784610
Mark McHarg, Corby	219210

KARNOV	Electric Dreams
Neil Innes, Musselburgh	577511
Paul Crockford, Midhurst	310020
Gavin Scott, Northampton	302150

MARAUDER	Hewson
Simon J Ladds, Grantham	431950
Gordon Dempster, Montrose	422350
Greg Martin, Bournemouth	293250

PLATOON	Ocean
Andrew Simmons, Winkleigh	571700
Derek Yardley, Bristol	343395
Kevin Gordon, Wolverhampton	264895

RAMPAGE	Activision
Neil Innes, Musselburgh	979050
Tony Taylor, Stockton-On-Tees	893105
Paul Grant, Dundee	610350

ROADBLASTERS	US Gold
Mark Thompson, Portishead	1220000
Ben Jewell, Falmouth	675920
James Coles, Congleton	95210

TARGET; RENEGADE	Imagine
Darran Lacey, Chesham	2338000
Jeffrey Murray, Jordanstown	2338497
Darren Wright, Birmingham	300100

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	Domark
Richard Johns, Milton Keynes	7372195
Dominic Roberts, Southampton	4575631
David Lees, Chorley	2568127

ZYNAPS	Hewson
Carl Stinson, Belfast	956210
William Sankey, Walsall	732130
Warren Davies, Oswestry	516700

WINNERS

£40 worth of superb software, including *Cybernoid* and *Marauder* (both from Hewson), is on its way to 14-year-old, **Mark Dingwall** of Sunderland. He also gets a super-trendy CRASH cap and King Grub T-shirt. Also getting caps and T-shirts are the lucky four runners-up. They are **Desmond Davis** from Mold in North Wales; **Andrew Wreford** of Heavitree, near the wonderful city of Exeter; **Robert Knowles** from Mansfield and **Jonathan Webb** of Sunderland.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT 5 . . . The *Driller* cheats continue to send unbelievably high scores in. This month two scores for 450 million were claimed. Perhaps they both found a cheat in the game itself, but come on, even if this were so, the scores can't be counted as genuine! . . . ANNOUNCEMENT ENDS

Don't forget – any score sent in to **SCORES** can win you a prize, even if it's not printed – but avoid unwanted public exposure: don't cheat!

SEND ME YOUR SCORES

NAME .... **AGE** ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

MY SCORES ARE:

GAME **SCORE**

1 ....

2 ....

3 ....

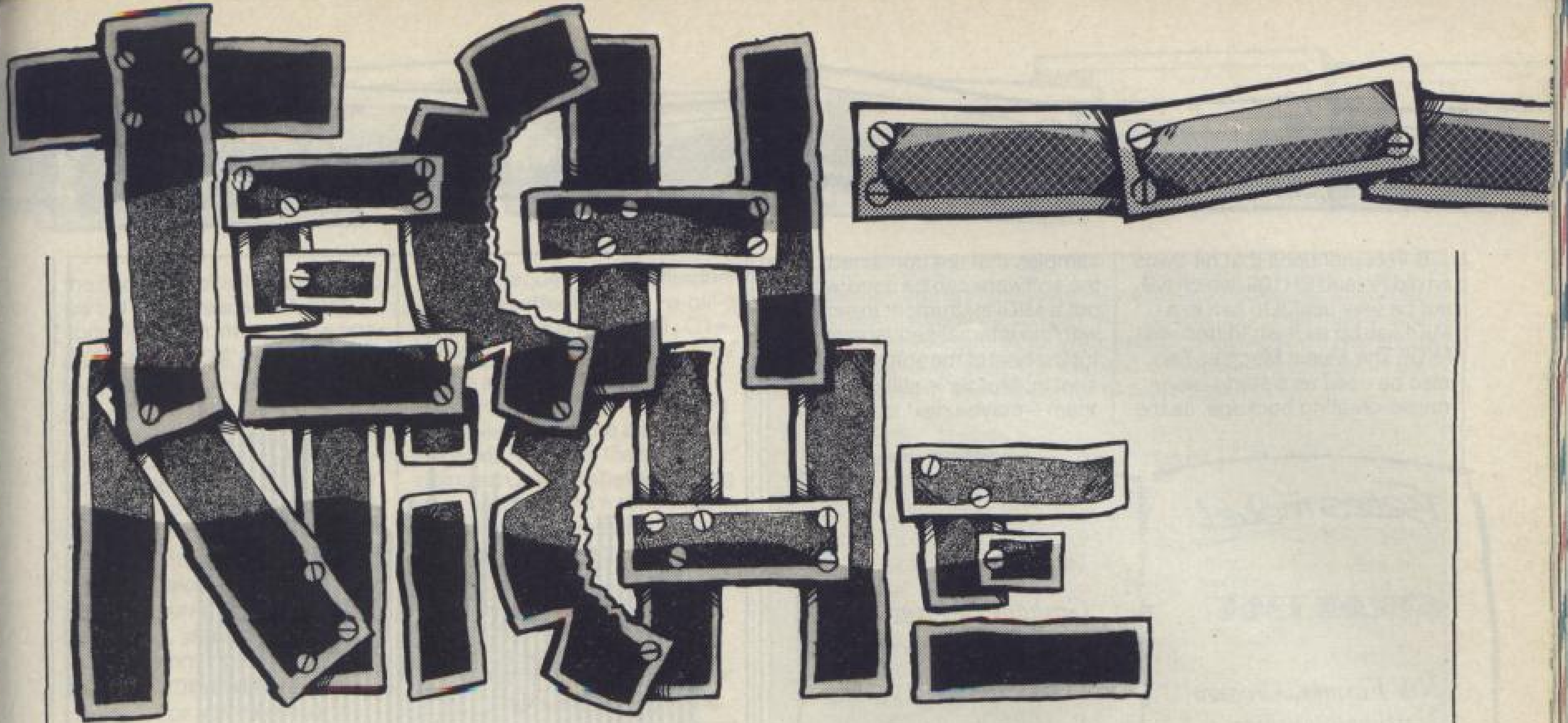
Send this form (or a copy) with your scores for up to three games to **PHIL KING'S SCORES, *CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. ONLY GENUINE SCORES WILL BE ACCEPTED; any improbably huge scores will be immediately binned and the sender will be forced to listen to Stuart talking about Cyberpunk for 24 hours (non-stop!) – a fate worse than watching him eat a Cornetto for breakfast!

IF I WIN TOP PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS £40 WORTH OF SOFTWARE: ....

....

AND IF I WIN ANY PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT, CHOSEN FROM THOSE ADVERTISED IN THE CRASH HYPERMARKET: ....

The decision of the super-powerful CRASH judges is final in all respects. So don't even let the thought of a confrontation cross your mind – you'll regret it!



TECH NICHE



LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Now that the ghosts of the Christmas guests have been well and truly shaken off, JON BATES can put away his dressing-gown and wig for a few days and amuse himself by boring holes in the cabin walls, not to mention writing about yet more Motel Madness.

HORROR OF horrors. One of the guests has brought along his +3 Spectrum. **Nick Farmer**, from Creaton in Northampton, like several others, couldn't get his RAM *Music Machine* to work with it. The software loads fine but not a squeak can he get from his amplifier or headphones. We ran a check. None of the MIDI interfaces that we could find on the motel shelves would work. I suspected treachery and so mother phoned the CRASH Tech Niche team, both past and present. She offered them a free night's free accomodation for a solution but they both seemed to be very busy. However, they did call back to tell us that the +3 has the power supply removed from the interface port at the back. A MIDI interface will need to pick up power from the Spectrum and with this removed it can't work. We pondered if you could lash-up your own, if you knew the voltage they ran on, but you'd risk trashing your interface.

The general consensus is that the +3 is just not suitable for music and there have been complaints that the sound from the internal AY8912 chip is distorted. But since all the programmes only use the 48K mode your best bet is probably to use an old Spectrum for music. (Thinks . . . must invite the design team from Amstrad along for an eventful evening in Cabin One.)

DISCORDANT MUSIC MACHINES

And now an astounding bit of work from **Graham Galbraith** from Wallsend in Newcastle. His set up consists of a Casio CZ230S, Roland MT32, RAM

> **'We pondered if you could lash-up your own'**

Music Machine and Speccy with an Atari ST to drive the lot. His problem was that the *Music Machine* refused to work properly. Basically . . .

1) The CZ would not play anything sent to it by the *MM* but the MT32 would (he assures us that he had the MIDI channels set correctly).

2) The *MM* would not play anything sent to it by the ST or the CZ230S properly. In fact the fault rate was about 50%. He came to the conclusion that it was the MIDI speed that was at fault. He measured the *MM* 's clock frequency and found it to be 0.02% inaccurate. By replacing a capacitor he was able to retune the clock frequency

> **'the fault rate was about 50%'**

accurately and voila, perfect harmony.

3) He also found that his *MM* had problems with MIDI-in and by altering the resistor that governs the internal LED, that in turn works the MIDI data, this too was curable.

I assume Graham is using the standard *MM* software. Having not come across this problem myself I can't say what originally caused it. Neither has the Motel been flooded with questions about it, but if anyone else is experiencing such problems write in and I'll print Graham's solution in full.

CHOICE INTERFACES

S Veni from Dover asks simply: 'What MIDI interfaces and software are available for the Spectrum?'

OK. Basically there are four interfaces, the aforementioned *Music Machine*, the Cheetah, the EMR and the XRI. The most popular is the *Music Machine* because it has a sampling facility built-in, as well as MIDI. The basic program is fairly reasonable but there are other programs that have been designed to run on it. For more details you should contact the user club **RAMM, c/o Al Straker, 1 Hill Crest Court, Shoot Up Hill, London NW2 3PG (☎ 01 452 1916). Quasar Software** cover all the interfaces mentioned above, except the EMR, and have a range of programs that include sequencers, librarians, and voice programmers for a variety of synths. They're currently working on a scoring package. Get hold of Quasar at **60 Bowsprit Point, Melish Street, London E14 8NU (☎ 01 987 3908).**

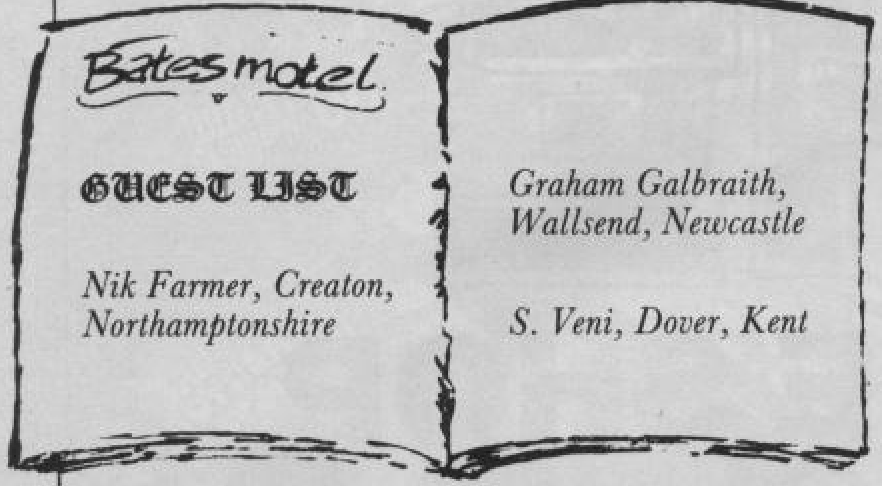
Cheetah themselves have not expanded on their basic sequencing package, having branched out into the hardware

> **'the Speccy is capable of anything'**

end of music. **EMR** have a basic set of sequencers and voice programmers, and **XRI** have a slightly larger suite of programs for step and real-time sequencing, voice programming and a very useful universal MIDI dump program. The important thing to remember is that with the exception of Quasar Software, none of the software is compatible with a rival make of hardware.

In short, the Speccy is capable of anything – it's your choice of hardware/software that defines its capabilities. Certainly the best bet would be the *Music Machine* as it also includes sampling and a pretty good range of software to support it. ▶

S Veni mentions that he owns an old Roland SH109, which will not be very useful to him in a MIDI set-up as it isn't fitted with MIDI! The *Music Machine* can also be used as a stand-alone music-creating package, as the samples that are contained on the software can be used without a MIDI instrument in sight with the internal sequencing. As for the best of the software tunes sent in, Mother is still judging them – maybe next issue . . . ?





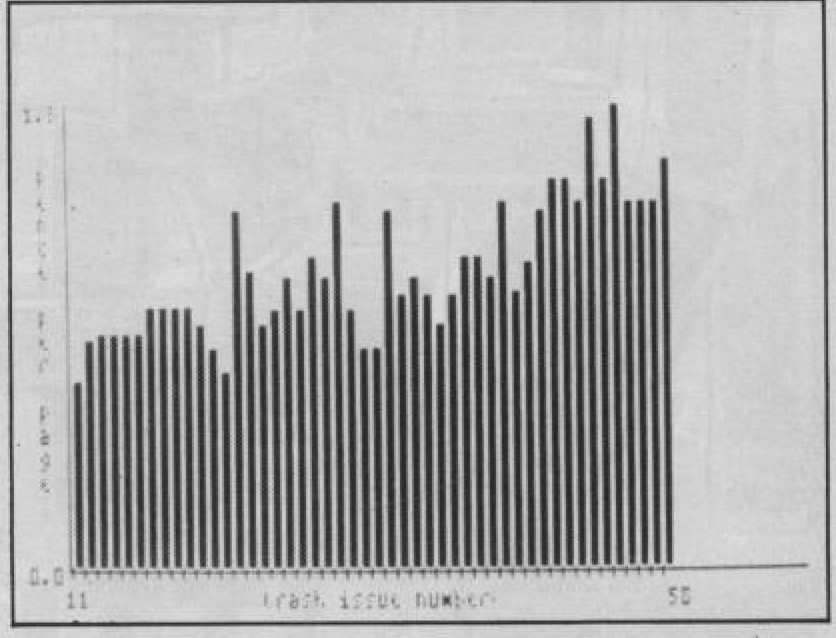
Calculators, copiers and +3 cock-ups preoccupy IAN CULL this month. Showing a commendable amount of self-discipline Ian dissects the various products with his usual laser sharpness, nary (LMSWD) a hint of festive bleariness anywhere.

SPECTRUM SUPER CALCULATOR

TasCalc, Lotus 1-2-3 *for £17.95?*

IN THE business world spreadsheet programs are huge sellers, and typically cost several hundred pounds. Simply put they're very sophisticated calculators. The Spectrum may be simple compared to the mega IBMs of this world, but with a minimum of 128K this powerful calculator can be yours too – thanks to Tasman Software's ***TasCalc***. The program is available on either tape or disk, the only difference being that the former can use microdrives, while the latter is set up for the built-in disk drive. Both versions can also save/load to tape.

The *TasCalc* 'super-calculator' consists of 52 columns (A . . . Z, AA . . . AZ) of 157 rows (totalling 8164 cells). Each cell can hold a number, a label, or a formula. Formulae can reference the contents of other cells, so that altering one cell can affect the whole spreadsheet (AZ=A1+C5). Numbers are entered just by typing them in, with the spreadsheet cursor, on the required cell. Labels (or simply text messages) are entered by pressing the " key first. Formulae are entered by first pressing the ENTER key.



The design of the spreadsheet is up to the user, making *TasCalc* very flexible in use. The width of each cell can be altered, which is useful for fitting more columns on the screen at once. The number of rows on screen at once is initially set to 13, unless the prompt menu at the top of the screen (as in *Tasword III*) is switched off (making four more rows visible).

The cursor can be moved around the spreadsheet using either the cursor keys, or by typing G to go to a particular cell – specified by typing its 'address'. If that cell is not onscreen a redraw occurs. Labels set up in column A and row 1 can also be used to reference a cell (eg COSTS.FEB would reference cell C3 if C1=COSTS and A3=FEB).

'The formulae are altered automatically as the echo occurs'

As the spreadsheet is built up, formulae will be entered which calculate new details from information entered in other cells – in the sheet I set up (see pic, hopefully), the page price of each issue of CRASH is calculated by dividing the issue price by the number of pages (G11 + B11★100/C11). The value of each formula is not, however, computed by *TasCalc* as it is entered. An Execute command must be entered whenever formulae need to be evaluated (*TasCalc* does not auto-calculate, as do spreadsheets on more powerful computers – this would be too slow). The execute can be limited to just the areas of the sheet which need updating, which helps to speed up the process.

It would be very laborious having to enter a separate formula for each cell in column G. In *TasCalc* this is not necessary – there is an Echo command, which I used to echo the G11 formula into G12-G50. The formulae are altered automatically as the echo occurs (so that G50 + B50★100/C50).

As the spreadsheet is developed, formulae are continually replaced and updated. Old formulae occupy memory, which will eventually be filled up. An Optimise command causes *TasCalc* to sort through the spreadsheet, eliminating unused formulae. This is a very slow process (4½ minutes for my spreadsheet containing 143 formulae). Turning off the display of the working cell does speed this up (to 53 seconds for the same sheet).

For major changes to the spreadsheet, there is a Copy command. This allows whole blocks of the spreadsheet to be moved around the work area. Formulae which reference cells that are moved are automatically altered by *TasCalc* during the copy. **WARNING**: there is a major problem with this command, when inserting rows into the spreadsheet. The copy proceeds row by row, top to bottom. There is no error check for overwriting, so if, for example, cells A10 to A20 are moved one row down to 11-21, then the result will be ten new copies of A10. The old values of A11 to A20 will be lost! Once you know about it, however, you can easily avoid the problem by copying

'Experimentation is simple and rewarding'

the complete block to an unused part of the spreadsheet, then copying it back into the new position (for example, copy A10-A20 to AA10-AA20, then back to A11-A21).

After such a process, the temporary copy area should be erased. However, if a full row or column is to be inserted (rather than just an extra cell in one column as in the above example), then *TasCalc* has commands to allow the current row/column to be deleted, shuffling all later rows/columns up/left; or an additional row/column to be inserted. For an insert or a delete, all formulae are altered to reference the newly-shifted cells.

The main use of spreadsheets is for quite simple calculations, referencing a large number of variables, which are set in the columns of the spreadsheet as tables. *TasCalc* also has a complete set of scientific and miscellaneous functions. Trigonometric functions (SIN, ATN, etc) are provided, as well as SQR, INT, PI and the other Spectrum BASIC functions. Also included, though, are spreadsheet-specific functions – for example AVE <range> which returns the average value of the cells in the range specified.

Whenever the spreadsheet is re-calculated, it is done cell by cell in strict order (normally A1-A157, B1-B157 . . . AZ1-AZ157). If a formula references a yet-to-be-calculated cell, then problems will occur as the value calculated will be wrong. This is a problem with all complex spreadsheets, and can only be solved by repeated re-calculation until the values are unchanging.

It is possible to create a spreadsheet in which the values will always be changed – this can be useful! I set up a Fibonacci (LM's BIG LWD) number sequence; each number displayed after the next re-calculation (A1=B1; B1=C1; C1=A1=B1).

The spreadsheet can be saved to disk or tape by calling up a files menu. The size saved depends how 'full' the sheet is – doing an Optimise before saving can result in quite a reduction in size. Any part of the spreadsheet can also be printed; *TasCalc* supports standard printers through almost all common Spectrum printer interfaces: parallel or serial.

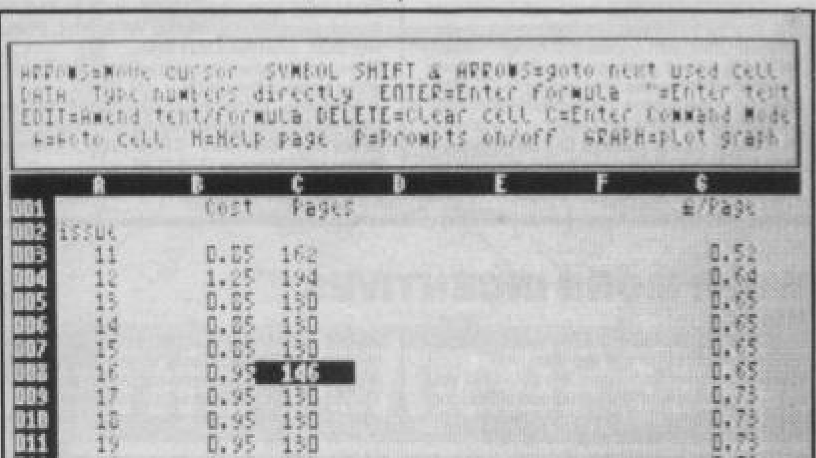
A powerful facility of *TasCalc* is its ability to produce graphs.

'The *TasCalc* manual is a reference work'

The range of the spreadsheet to be plotted is given, and a graph (either line-type or bar graph) appears almost instantly. I had problems with *TasCalc* only plotting the integer part of the cell values – solved by scaling the values into another column of the spreadsheet. The graph displayed cannot be printed, but can be saved to disk or tape for printing later.

The *TasCalc* manual is a reference work, aimed at users who already know how to use a spreadsheet. However, for those wishing to learn, experimentation is simple and rewarding. The manual is detailed, but has no index section.

TasCalc costs £17.95 on tape for the 128K and +2 Spectrums, or £19.95 on disk for the +3. Write to Tasman at **Springfield House, Hyde Terrace, LEEDS LS2 9LN**. Anyone needing the power of a spreadsheet should be very happy with *TasCalc*, provided they are not in too much of a hurry for the Spectrum to calculate the results.



Problems getting your old ZX Printer to work with your Spectrum +3? Well, worry no longer. Ace-tipster Ian Cull has come up with the solution to all your printer problems. No more hot and bother with your old thermal scratcher. Just type in the following listing and the power of print is yours . . .

```
  10 REM Loader for ZX print.
  15 REM Ian Cull Bsc. 20/9/88.
  20 CLEAR 59999
  30 LET adr=60000: LET lnum=1000
  40 READ a$: IF a$="END" THEN GO TO 200
  50 LET a=LEN (a$)
  60 IF a$(a-2)<>"=" THEN PRINT
     "Missing = in line ";lnum: STOP
  70 IF a/2=INT (a/2) THEN PRINT
     "Wrong length in line ";lnum: STOP
  80 LET ck=0: FOR x=1 TO a-3 STEP 2
  90 LET n1=CODE (a$(x))-48: IF n1>9
     THEN LET n1=n1-7
 100 LET n2=CODE (a$(x+1))-48: IF n2>9
     THEN LET n2=n2-7
 110 LET n=n1*16+n2
 120 POKE adr,n: LET adr=adr+1
 130 LET ck=ck+n: IF ck>255 THEN LET
     ck=ck-256
 140 NEXT x
 150 LET c1=CODE (a$(a-1))-48: IF c1>9
     THEN LET c1=c1-7
 160 LET c2=CODE (a$(a))-48: IF c2>9
     THEN LET c2=c2-7
 170 IF c1*16+c2<>ck THEN PRINT
     "Checksum error in line ";lnum: STOP
 180 LET lnum=lnum+10
 190 GO TO 40
 200 IF adr<>60178 THEN PRINT "Missing
     data somewhere !": STOP
 210 PRINT "All OK, probably ...": STOP
 999 REM
1000 DATA "CDB4EACD9AEAFDCB=84"
1010 DATA "01CECDDF0ECD6B0D=CE"
1020 DATA "CD9AEACDE6EA2A4F=67"
1030 DATA "5C110F0019118AEA=1A"
1040 DATA "2210EB7323720100=26"
1050 DATA "00C9CDB4EACD9AEA=85"
1060 DATA "CDF409CD9AEACDE6=CE"
1070 DATA "EAC9E5D5C5F50600=2D"
1080 DATA "21005B1114EB1A4E=F4"
1090 DATA "777912231310F7F1=30"
1100 DATA "C1D1E1C9F3C5F53A=23"
1110 DATA "675B3212EB01FD1F=0E"
1120 DATA "F60432675BED793A=8E"
1130 DATA "5C5B3213EB01FD7F=64"
1140 DATA "F610325C5BED79E5=3A"
1150 DATA "210EEB22515CE1FD=C7"
1160 DATA "CB01A6F1C1C9C5F5=A7"
1170 DATA "3A12EB01FD1F3267=ED"
1180 DATA "5BED793A13EB01FD=F7"
1190 DATA "7F325C5BED79E52A=DD"
1200 DATA "10EB22515CE1FDCB=73"
1210 DATA "01E6F1C1FBC9F409=5A"
1220 DATA "C55C=21"
1999 DATA "END"
```

AS MENTIONED last month, Kobrahsoft have released another useful program for +3 owners. This program fills the gaps of *DICE* (Issue 57), by allowing commercially-protected disk programs (as well as normal +3 disks) to be backed-up to another disk, or to tape. Protection systems for disks vary, but they are likely to get more sophisticated in time. It is likely, therefore, that programs like *DB1* will need regular updating to keep abreast of the manufacturers' skills.

DB1 is an automatic copier program, but is not in the same league of friendliness as *DICE*. When the program is loaded, the screen shows a two-line menu, and no help at all. The program has a number of options, one (not on the menu!) allows a new disk to be logged in. The filenames on the disk are displayed, and can be selected by using the cursor keys and pressing S when the required filenames are pointed to.

Selected files can be transferred to a second disk, deleted, renamed or transferred to tape. The boot sector can also be saved to tape or disk, if it is in use.

Pressing G allows files on tape to be copied back to disk. Normal tape-based software can also be transferred in this way. A disk can also be formatted, in one of four ways (including Amstrad data format, giving 178K per side). The formats are no faster to access than the standard +3 format, however (unlike the CP/M format command).

The main facility of *DB1*, and the one which *is* easy to use, is the Clone command. *DB1* first, annoyingly, asks for the original *DB1* disk to be inserted for 'protection purposes' (explained later). Once this has been done, *DB1* reads the source disk, and automatically figures out the protection methods employed by the disk manufacturers

'Not in the same league of friendliness as *DICE*

(hopefully). The clone disk is automatically formatted identically to the source disk as *DB1* proceeds. The time taken to clone the disk can be very long, seemingly depending on how sophisticated the protection method employed is.

I tested *DB1* with one of the *Ultimate Collection* disks, and ended up with a perfect copy in less than two minutes. Cloning *Where Time Stood Still*, however, took 4½ minutes. I tried a few other disks, which all cloned successfully – *DB1* even cloned an unformatted disk (in ten minutes!).

DB1 is not fully debugged, so care is needed especially considering the limited prompts given by the program. For example, pressing T (to transfer) twice, with no disk in the drive, causes the program the hang, decrementing the MEM= counter constantly. However, when used correctly, I found no problems!

DB1 costs £12.95 on disk, or is available together with *DICE*

'*DB1* is not fully debugged'

at £19.95. It is therefore quite an expensive program, but a worthwhile investment if you own many commercial disk programs, assuming that all can be copied by *DB1*. Please remember that the policy of Kobrahsoft & CRASH is that programs like this must **only** be used for making private BACK-UP copies just in case your disk should become faulty, **not** for distributing illegal copies around friends.

Final comment: I am very disappointed that *DB1* itself is copy protected, and ironically it will not copy itself! Surely the whole point of *DB1* is to protect the purchaser against disks being damaged. It is also irritating that *DB1* has to re-read the master disk before each clone – especially considering that the disk is

'Ironically it will not copy itself'

uncopyable, and *DB1* cannot even be copied by the Multiface+3. If ever the *DB1* disk is corrupted, Kobrahsoft will replace it, but may make a charge for the privilege. One code for the games producers, another for the copier-makers it seems . . .

Another month, another column. All those of you interested in the *DB1/DICE* double-pack, order your February issue now because I'll be reviewing Version 2 of *DICE* then, not to mention another look over the intriguing SAM.

Letters begging for my expert advice in these pages, and Nobel prize-winning hints/information, should be sent to Ian Cull, Tech Niche, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

WINNERS AND PRIZES

MEET THE CABINET IN LATEX

Issue 58

What do you get if you cross latex rubber with two totally warped minds, no it's not Phil despite what Nick says. The answer is of course ***Spitting Image***. We gave you a piccy of Mr John 'Sly Stallone' Rambo, and asked you to think up a suitably witty answer. The lucky winner will get a day trip to Limehouse Studios Saturday 17 December to see exactly how the *Spitting Image* puppets are made. The CRASH winner will then be entered into a competition to see just how well they can imitate their favourite *Spitting Image* character. The overall winner of this little comp will receive a *Spitting Image* puppet themselves, a great prize worth a load of money. **Nicholas Young** of Saddleworth in Lancs is the lucky person going to the studios, and good luck to him. The second-prize winners will receive a pair of *Spitting Image* slippers, they are. . . .

Matthew Mckelvey, Surrey CR4 7SG and Teresa Moss, Suffolk IP14 4DG.

Five third-prize winners will get a *Spitting Image* video, the lucky people are . . .

Jonathan Webb, Sunderland SR4 8LP; Andrew Wilson, Essex RM2 6QB; Malcolm Sims, Kent CT1 1YF; Stephen Barclay, Glasgow G61 3PR; Scott Donaldson, Hamilton ML3 0PN.

And last but not least, twenty runners-up prizes of the *Spitting Image* book will go to . . .

Robert Edwards, Oxfordshire OX9 2AN; Shahid Nawaz, Birmingham B20 3QY; James Bailey, Minehead TA24 5SS; Philip Wynn, Beds MK45 4BT; Stacey Elliott, Swindon SN2 1NW; Gary Marr, Sheffield S5 8RP; Amer Hayat, Essex IG2 7DQ; Richard Baird, Mansfield NG19 0DX; Simon Mercer, Kent DA5 3AT; R Kunikowski, Coventry CV2 2AH; Mark Lawton, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 7LW; Ian Cook, Suffolk CB9 0DH; Steven Martin, London N13 5DT; Simon Seabridge, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 6BT; Roy Harwood, W. Sussex RH13 8BX; Adam Moss, Suffolk IP14 4DG; M Corton, London E11 3LS; Alex Fisher, Manchester M12 5LP; Ands Lowdon, Perth PL2 7HT; Ian Slavin, Liverpool L11 9AG.

PINBALL WIZARD ARTIST

Issue 58

Ah, yes, the gentle pinging of the ball bouncing around the pinball table, the muttered curses as the fourth tilt in a row – great stuff. *Arcade Wizard* is one of the latest games in **US Gold**'s glittering history and takes the player round a variety of pinball machines. In this comp we asked you to let your imagination run riot and design a futuristic-looking pinball table. There must be a lot of budding artists out there because the entries flooded in. Picking a winner was really hard but there could only be one winner and that lucky chap is **Tim O'Brien** of London SW17. He gets a JVC VHS video recorder . . . and no, we haven't a deal with JVC.

Ten runners-up will receive a US Gold hat, a sweatshirt and a US Gold game of their choice, the lucky ten are. . . .

Matthew Trickett, Sheffield S18 5QS; Darren Lomax, Lancs OL8 3PB; Daniel Hall, Dorset BH23 5NS; Robert Mellor, W.Yorks HD7 4NN; B Dunbar, N.Yorks HG1 2NP; Paul Bennett, Bucks HP21 8EG; Barry R Smith, Suffolk IP6 8PG; Michael Ragg, Nr Hull HU12 9QH; N Baker, Derbys. DE7 4EW; Justin Mitchell, Suffolk CB9 7NH.

Five third-prize winners will receive a US Gold hat and a US Gold game of their choice. . . .

Steven Boow, Cheshire WA7 5JE; Daniel Martin, Hants PO11 9NY; William Dunk, W.Yorks HD8 8PP; Stepheň Drysdale, Scotland PH1 2ND; David Hall, Manchester M32 9HA.

STAY OUT OF TROUBLE KIDS

Issue 58

RoboCop is undoubtedly one of my favourite movies of 1988 and is a must-see for all over 18s. Thanks to **Ocean** five fortunate people have won their own copies of this high-velocity thriller. We asked you to answer the questions we set them in on the next available ED 209. Apart from the videos the fortunate winners will also get a *RoboCop* T-shirt and a copy of the brilliant Ocean game (a CRASH Smash in Issue 59). Naturally all the winners are over 18 and these mature people are. . . .

L A Davies, Bucks HP20 2FW; B Bell, Hants PO12 2SJ; A Harrison, Birkenhead L43 2JY; David Arundel, W. Yorks WF8 2RH; Philip Northall, Sheffield S31 9HF.

Five runners up will receive a *RoboCop* T-shirt and a copy of the game. . . .

A Manning, Birkenhead; J Coates, Surrey CR0 4DA; J Revie, Glasgow G21 3UN; Toni Brackley, Cornwall TR26 1EP; Yvonne Ramsay, Glasgow G76 7LW.

WOW! MORE INCENTIVES

Issue 54

Do you remember way back in Issue 54 when we set a competition on the then new **Incentive** game *Dark Side*. We provided you with a demo tape of the game and asked for your high scores. Cheating was useless because Incentive had ways to tell the cheats from the great players that I know all CRASH readers are. The one lucky winner will soon be in possession of a an amazing Amstrad TVR2/TV/Video combination unit. That fortunate soul is **David Stewart**, Ayrshire, KA13 6JJ.

All winners, please allow 28 days for the delivery of your prizes. All queries regarding competitions run in CRASH should be sent to **The Sticky Solutions Department, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** Please don't ring the department as they have enough trouble reading through all your entries as it is.


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STICKS IN THE MUD

Christmas time seems to have brought forward quite a few new joysticks, with the *Navigator* in particular being heavily-hyped. Most of them look really good, but how do they play? Two of the CRASH lads put them to the test, on ALL types of software ('cept word processors, of course!) . . .



NAVIGATOR

Konix £14.99

MARK Famed for their **Speedking** joysticks, Konix's latest 'designer' joystick has already won worldwide advance orders of over a million. It looks like a *Star Trek* phaser as used by Captain Kirk (or is it Picard now?) and is claimed to be an 'ergonomic design' for 'maximum efficiency'. In fact this 'brilliant' design curves the bottom of the joystick so it's impossible to rest it on a table, which can be tiring. The actual joystick on top of the grip is surprisingly small and for people with big hands, like me, this is irksome. On the positive side the small size means the length of travel is very short, making it both very responsive and precise. These virtues should last some time as the stick has a steel shaft and is fully microswitched – Konix guarantee it for a year. The fire button is also microswitched and is well-placed underneath the player's index finger.

For +2 and +3 owners Konix have thoughtfully included a second 9-way D-plug that fits straight into these machines. Unfortunately the autofire, for some reason doesn't work with these machines. Nevertheless this is a surprisingly effective stick which doesn't just rely on its looks to appeal.

PHIL The idea a joystick with a pistol-grip sounds a good one, but in practice it has some serious drawbacks. During joystick-waggling games, for example, you can't get enough leverage. Still, for games where precise movements are needed this is entirely adequate, even if the stick is a bit too-small for my liking.

Rating: ★★★★

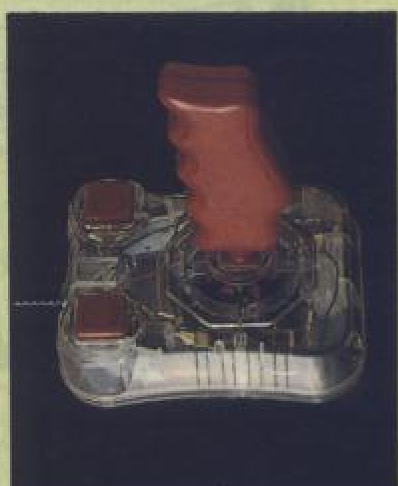


CRYSTAL CLEAR/TURBO

Powerplay £14.99 (Clear), £16.99 (Turbo)

MARK These must be the best-looking 'clear' joysticks around; they really are nice, and come with a superb five year guarantee. The only difference between the two types is that the Turbo has autofire and rubber suction feet. In action they feel already well-worn in, responding well to either frantic waggling or precision movements. They're a bit noisy, but perform very well indeed.

PHIL Despite a fairly flimsy appearance these are really durable sticks and should stand up well to some hard playing. The nylon shaft does, however, have a tendency to detach itself from the main body if it's twisted. Not an everyday action when gamesplaying you may think . . . Ed busted all ours like this, and then proceeded into the TGM office and broke their two! But my only reservation is that that the grip is a little on the small side for me – try before you buy!



Rating: ★★★

TAC 30

Suncom £13.99

MARK While looking a little flimsy this has a full two-year guarantee (return either to dealer or MicroProse, NOT Suncom, USA). Another good point is the 'silent microswitches' feature which works. Unfortunately the price of this advantage is an exceptionally poor feel. All three fire buttons and the joystick's directional control feel very dead, requiring exaggerated movements to get a minimal of control.
PHIL The only sound with this is of plastic surfaces rubbing together, but responsiveness is terrible. It is extremely difficult to obtain vertical and horizontal directions, and while diagonals are easily accessed what use is that?



Rating: ★½

DELTA 3s

Voltmace £14.95

MARK What's going on? Why can't I change channels with this dratted thing? Whoops! My mistake, it isn't a TV remote-control unit, it's a joystick. A chunky oblong with a spindly-looking shaft and three oddly-placed tiny fire buttons – it's certainly original. No less strange is how this tiny stick has such a long travel – it's worse than the *Quickshot*. Held in the hand it's awkward to hold, but it seems designed for table use and works well enough there. As for toughness, we haven't managed to break it yet so it's worth experiencing.
PHIL Cor! It's almost like playing with a matchstick! Even more amazing is the long travel – the stick can be moved to about 45° from the vertical, stopped only by hitting the sides of the surrounding 'dimple' in the casing! Yet despite the definite lack of feel, the *Delta 3s* is well-suited to hand-held/table-mounted play and in practice proves surprisingly responsive, although a question mark must be put against its durability.



Rating: ★★★

RAM DELTA

RAM Electronics £9.99

MARK This is yet another strange-looking thing. The long shaft topped off with a large red fire button is probably its most striking feature. Inside we get the familiar microswitches, but thankfully they're pretty quiet, with only a barely audible click. Fire buttons are similarly reserved, and work well with a nice springy feel. The angular shape makes the stick easy to hold in your hand while the three suckers on the bottom ensure that one-handed play is possible. With autofire and a two year guarantee it's worth a try.
PHIL This gearstick-like joystick has a solid, springy feel to it but the travel is far too long, so games requiring fast reactions are out. Another problem is the large fire button on top of the shaft – it's all too easy to accidentally fire when you're moving, while changing your hand position to avoid this results in a less-than-satisfactory grip. Despite its undoubted durability, the *RAM Delta* proves ergonomically unsound.



Rating: ★★★½

CRUISER

Powerplay £9.99 (Original) and £12.99 (Clear)

MARK The original *Cruiser* joystick has been at CRASH Towers a fair while now and although the red/blue finish is a little bright, they've proved exceptionally durable. The shaft is very robust and the microswitches give a good, but not overly loud click at each movement. Fire buttons are large and respond well. The unique feature, however, is a 'collar' on the stick – pull the stick up and you can swivel this into one of three positions, choosing either sensitive, normal or firm responsiveness. This is also featured on the new Clear joystick which has a neat autofire activated simply by holding down fire. Both of these have a year guarantee.
PHIL Now here's a stick which lives up to expectations. It looks good and feels very solid. Furthermore, its sensitivity is adjustable so it's suitable for any type of game and extremely durable – we've had them around the office for the past six months and they're still working! The *Cruiser* is definitely the joystick of the moment and for its excellent all-round qualities is very hard to beat.



Rating: ★★★★★

QUICKSHOT II TURBO

Spectravideo £10.99

MARK The original *Quickshot* joysticks were among the most attractive around when they first appeared, unfortunately their beauty did not wear well, many breaking quite quickly. The *Quickshot II Turbo* is their best-looking joystick yet in my opinion, and moreover it has microswitches so it should last longer. The length of travel is still a little long however – not really suitable for precision games. The other drawback is the adult scaling, personally I found it quite comfortable but for little hands it could be really awkward. There is autofire though and two good fire buttons.
PHIL Nice casing, but what about the responsiveness? The huge, moulded shaft looks and feels great for flight simulators etc, but for other game-types it's far too cumbersome. Otherwise, it feels fairly solid and responsive, but where other sticks are too small, this one is just that fraction too big.



Rating: ★★★½

That's all folks, remember that the opinions of the CRASH lads are only meant as a guide. There are many joysticks on the market, we've covered what we could get hold of (further updates when we receive any more – hint, hint). Opinions on joysticks are as individual as those on games – 'every hand is different' as Lloyd's granny says. Certainly you should ask to try one before buying it, and of course keep your receipt, especially for those with long guarantees. You should also bear in mind none of these joysticks, with the single exception of the *Navigator*, will work with the +2 or +3 joystick interfaces without a small converter, such as the Frel adaptor (£2.50 – see the CRASH Hypermarket, page 95). But whichever one you choose it's got to be better than the Sinclair *SJS-1* . . . !

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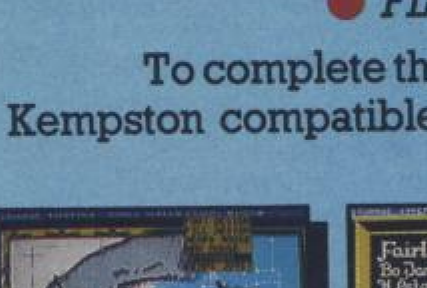
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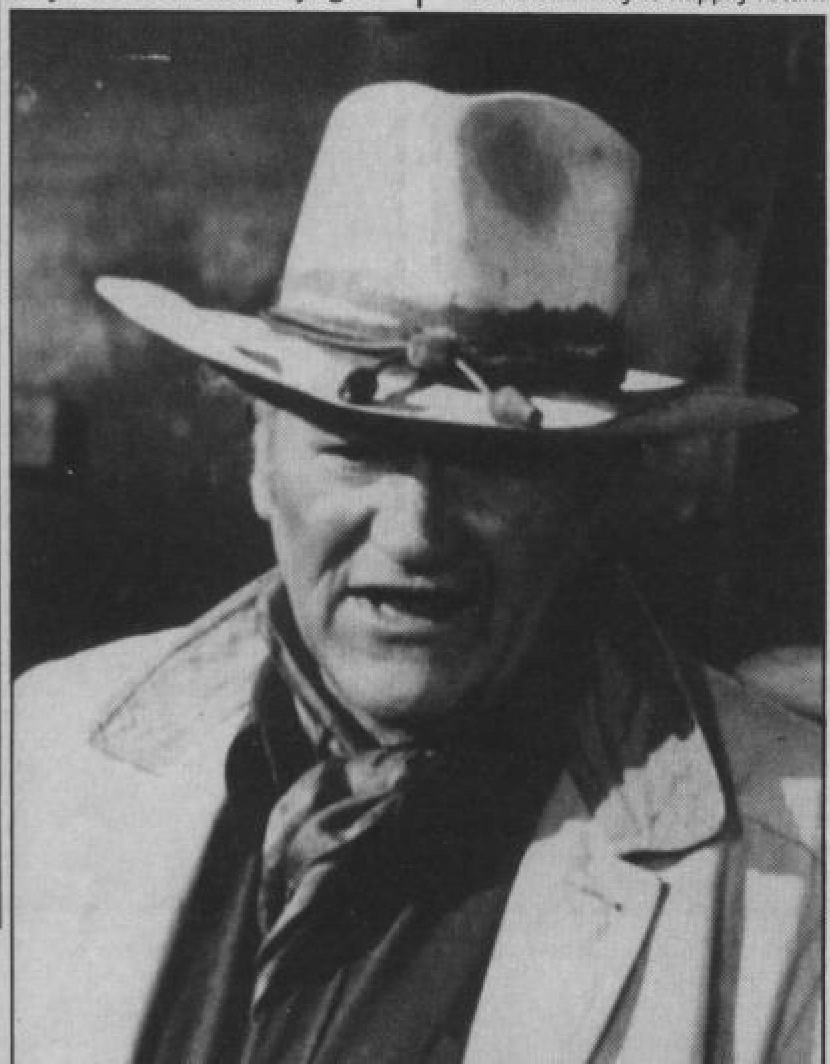


Super heroes for sale!!!

After last month's flurry of big-name releases there's a bit of a lull this month, but **Warner Brothers** collection series rolls on with some true Hollywood legends. First off there's ***John Wayne: An American Legend*** which includes eleven of the Duke's most famous films for £9.99 each. The first of these is ***The Searchers*** (U), a classic western with Wayne on the track of Commanches who've kidnapped his niece. Another Wayne classic, albeit of a lighter mood, is ***Rio Bravo*** (PG). Here Wayne is a local sheriff trying to stop a well-connected killer escaping his jail – **Dean Martin** provides dubious support. Another very good film is ***The Horse Soldiers*** (PG), an American Civil War adventure.

Wayne directed himself in ***The Alamo*** (PG), a somewhat overlong story of the Mexican siege of a Texan fort redeemed by the brilliant climax. Yet more evidence of Wayne's patriotism was provided by ***The Green Berets*** (PG). Set in Vietnam it suffered from a dire script and was released just as most Americans were turning against the war.

1970 saw Wayne happily return to the Western with ***Chisum*** (PG). The story of a cattle baron fighting against corrupt businessmen to save his land is enjoyable, if ultimately forgettable stuff. Similarly disappointing is ***The Cowboys*** (PG), here Wayne is accompanying some young boys on a cattle drive. In ***Cahill*** (15) Wayne finds his own sons to be involved in a robbery he's investigating, a blandly moralizing film it's only average. Slightly more pleasing is the comedy ***The Train***



THE BOOK CORNER

CYBER WYNNE dematerializes himself to pass through the latest (well, some are a bit old actually – Stuart) batch of science fiction.

Just park your Imperial Cruiser outside and enter the world of daleks and droids.

Firstly we have **The Legacy Of Heorot** (Sphere, £3.50, 400pp) by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Steven Barnes. The first two writers have previously collaborated on best-sellers like *Footfall* but this is the first to involve Barnes. The story concerns the arrival of human colonists on the planet Tau Ceti Four, an apparently peaceful place which soon proves otherwise. Described as a print *Aliens* it has much of the speed and tension of that film and while lacking depth should keep you reading until late.

Larry Niven's best book, however, remains his rereleased classic **Ringworld**. If you haven't already got it – buy now! The hardware is dazzling, the characterization effective and amusing, while the plot is enthralling. With some serious issues, and without the tiresome 2-D, right-wing characterizations of Pournelle, it's excellent. The sequel **Ringworld Engineers** isn't too bad either.

Another well-known SF name is Michael Crichton, a Hollywood director of some repute he's also a good author. His 1969 novel **The Andromeda Strain** was an excellent, documentary-style thriller about a lethal virus brought to Earth by a meteor. Fans of the film should find the rereleased book even better. Crichton's latest book, **Sphere** (Pan, £3.99, 385pp) is something of a disappointment though. The story revolves around the discovery of an extremely high-tech object deep undersea. Its mystery turns out to be not that special, the ending is a horrible cliché and the characterization is terribly flat. But if you haven't read this sort of thing before you could find it fairly interesting.

An extremely high-tech object also forms the centrepiece of Greg Bear's **Eon** (Legend, £4.95, 504pp). But in this case the mystery is special, the plotting tight and exciting, while characterization is good. Spoilt only by the flat, Cold War portrayal of the Russians this is a recommended read. Unfortunately not in the same league is Mike Resnick's **The Dark Lady** (Legend, £2.99, 279pp). This concerns the pursuit of the title's mysterious lady by various colourful characters in the far future. Who is she? Has she really lived for thousands of years? The pursuit is interesting, but as with Resnick's earlier, and better, *Santiago* the story's resolution is weak. Nevertheless it's another enjoyable read.

Robbers (U) where Wayne tries to clear the name of a widow's husband. ***McQ*** (15), by contrast, features Wayne as a modern day cop attempting to revenge his friend – an entertaining action movie, but there isn't too much to think about. The sequel in 1979, ***Brannigan*** (15), replicates the action formula in London.

Warner's second collection this month is its ***Super Heroes*** one, somewhat loosely titled as besides Superman it also features Supergirl and Santa Claus! The first ***Superman*** (PG) movie was an undoubted classic. An excellent script, which subtly poked fun at the fantasy while paradoxically make it more believable, together with some fine acting by **Christopher Reeve** and Oscar-winning effects ensured a sequel. ***Superman II*** (PG) went back to the planet Krypton to find a trio of super criminals sent off into space. Three against one, and with Superman renouncing his powers to wed Lois Lane, made for another great film, with even more dazzling action. How to follow such a great action movie? How about a comedy? ***Superman III*** (PG) involved **Richard Pryor** and **Pamela Stephenson**, but the resulting cheap laughes were unworthy of all involved. The series seemed finished with this till Cannon bought the rights and offered Reeve more money he couldn't refuse. ***Superman IV: The Quest For Peace*** combined second-rate special effects and mediocre script – with Metropolis set up in Milton Keynes!

Recognizing Reeve would pull out sooner or later Hollywood had the bright idea of ***Supergirl*** (PG) starring **Helen Slater**. Much of the film concerns the battle between Slater and villainess **Faye Dunaway** over the affections of a young man. Over-long and bland it makes bearable watching on TV. ***Santa Claus – The Movie***, meanwhile, seems included for lack of another collection to put it in. Starring **Dudley Moore** as a crooked elf a great opening gives way to an ultimately mediocre tale.

A comedy of a slightly more adult tone is the rental release ***Making Mr Right*** (RCA/Columbia – 15). Directed by **Susan Seidelman**, who also did the fabulous *Desperately Seeking Susan*, this tells of the world's first android, created in the image of its maker but for the fact it's probably more human. The romance between android and its PR woman is light-hearted and enjoyable, if not quite as hilarious as it could've been.

A more serious story is told in ***Suspect*** (RCA/Columbia – 15) starring **Cher** and **Dennis Quaid**. Cher is a lawyer struggling with the apparently impossible defence of a deaf-mute charged with murder. Quaid is one of the jury members and is so impressed by Cher he turns amateur investigator to help her. A very tense and exciting film it should do well on rental . . .

I dare say they'll be plenty of TV to watch over Christmas too. *The Sound Of Music, Wizard Of Oz, Chitty, Chitty, Bang Bang . . .*



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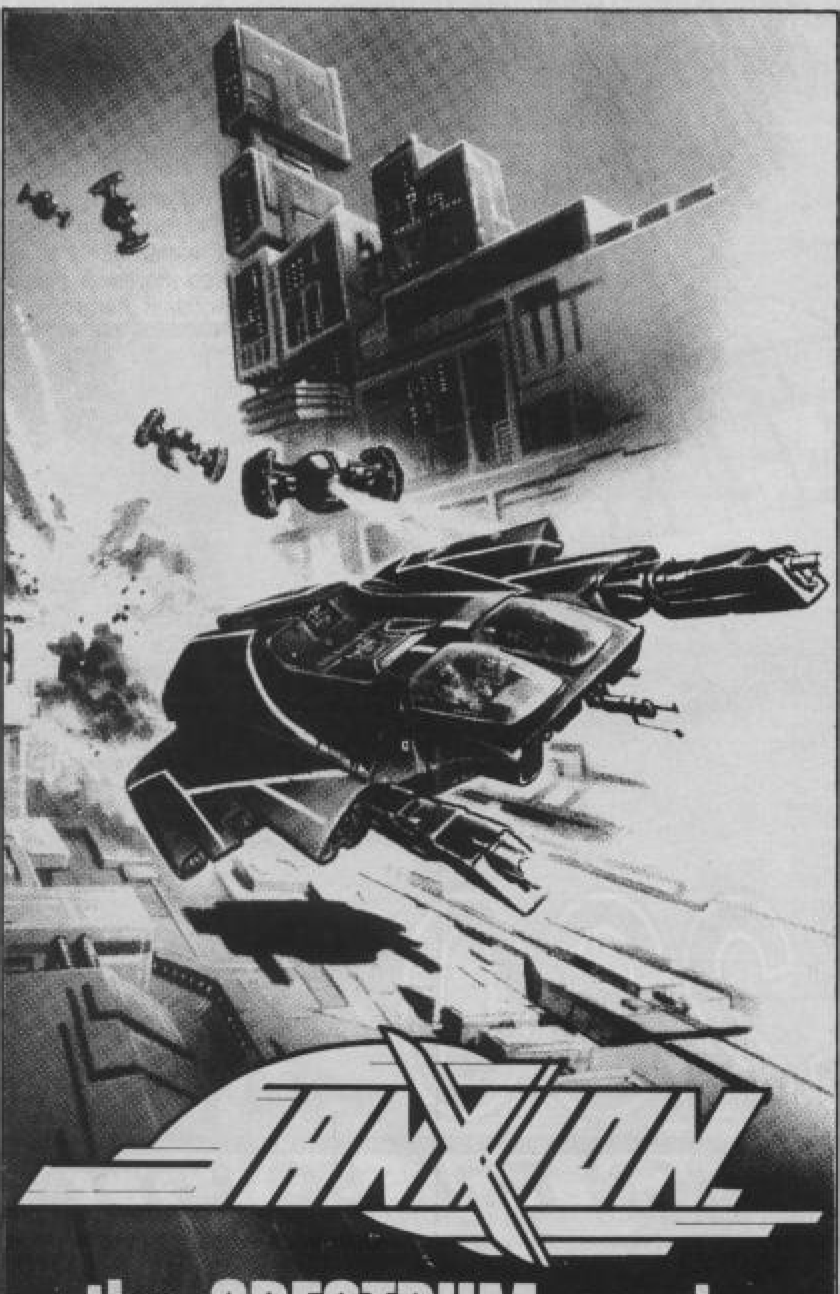
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WOBBLIN' AWAY IN HIS HIJACKED ROCKET, OUR HERO COUNTS HIS BLESSINGS...
AAAA
POK
BAM
BYE-EE
SNIGGER
HAH! NOW TO SET COURSE FOR EARTH! ER... THAT'S ON PAGE TWELVE, INNIT...? MEBBE PAGE FOURTEEN.... UM....? HAH! NOW TO SET COURSE FOR THE PLANET MUNGO.... ON PAGE TWO!
POK
BAM
HIJACKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
OIL
MEANWHILE..... THE PARROTMEN, MING'S SWORN ENEMIES, ARE FLOCKING FOR THE MAIN EVENT.....
OKAY, YOU GUYS...
SQWAWK
WERK
WE'LL CATCH THE OTHER LOONY LATER, RIGHT NOW WE GOIN' CLOBBER MINGS BUNCH, SO MOUNT UP...
AN' MOVE 'EM OUT!
YAAY!
OO'S A PRETTY BOY, THEN...
RAA-RAA-RAA
TROM TROM TROM
STREWTH! THOSE PARROTMEN ARE COMING!! IT LOOKS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH!
EH?
FIRST IT WAS THE MUDMEN, THEN IT WAS THE HAWKMEN, THEN THE TREEMEN! NOW I GOTTA SWAT THIS LOT.... PREPARE MY ROCKETSHIP!
DOES HE MEAN THE ROCKETSHIP?
YUP
THE ONE WE GAVE TO THE LOONY...?
YUP!
HAH! LOOK AT THEM WITH THEIR ROBOTS LINED UP AGAINST ME! BUT I AM NOT AFRAID! I EAT UP ALL MY CRUSTS, AND I'VE NEVER LOST A BATTLE YET, HAVE YOU, LADS?
RUN
RUN AWAY
FLEE
QUIT
EXIT
S'GO
HUP!
AN' HURRY IT UP WITH MY ROCKETSHIP!
OO'S A PRETTY BOY, THEN? RAA-RAA-RAA
GERTCHA!
MEANWHILE, OUR HERO, WHO HAS BEEN FLYING AROUND IN CIRCOIDS HAS A BRAIN-WAVE....
LOOKIT! A 'HOME' BUTTON! JUST WHERE I WANNA GO SO I'LL PRESS IT!
HOME
BRAAAA
IF THEY DON'T GET MY MY ROCKETSHIP SOON, SOMEONE GONNA GET IT INNA NECK!
WHAAAAA
GAWSH!

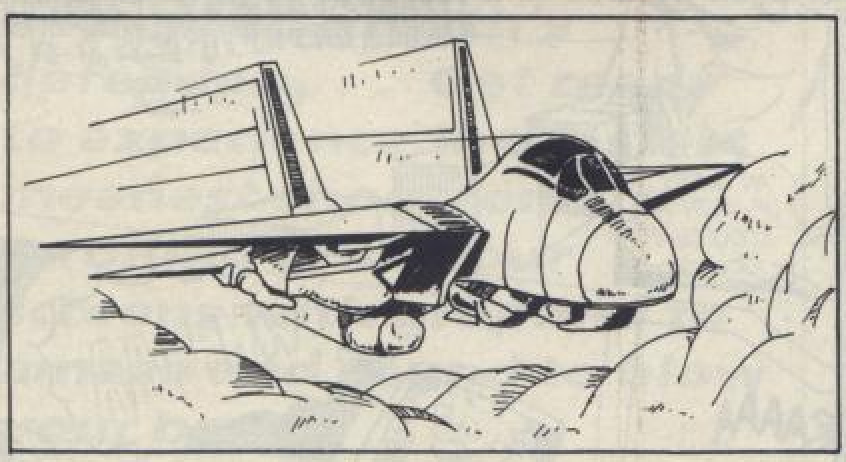
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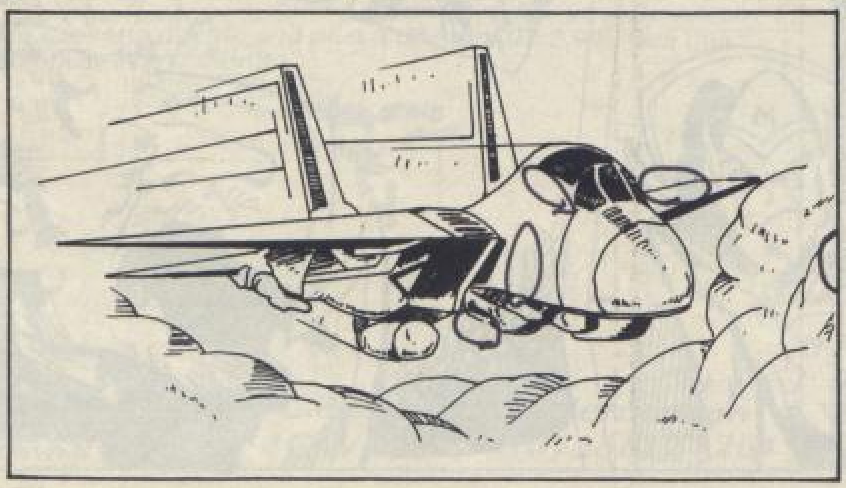
AFTERBURNER

in the arcade is deservedly a great hit and its high-speed Spectrum conversion seems likely to be no less popular. The CRASH lads certainly love it – when they play they get each other to swivel the chair around to simulate the original's hydraulics, although they don't go as far as throwing each other out of the window when the onscreen plane crashes (no, they just try and throw me out). But thankfully I don't have to venture into the CRASH office too often; only to get my orders from the loud-voiced Editor who seems to have a telephone receiver constantly stuck to his ear. Sounds a bit like me, doesn't it? On the 'phone morning, noon and night, arranging the competitions that keep me in a job, it reminds me of the time (brrr brrr) . . . excuse me the phone is ringing. Sorry, that was someone else trying to arrange a comp, where was I? Oh yes, **Activision**'s *Afterburner* competition . . .

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Now then to win one these prizes take a look at these two piccies – yep it's spot the diff time again – just ring the **FIVE** differences and send your entry to us by January 27. Anyone found sending their entry in late will be visited by Mr Cruise and his F-14 (get back girls!) – and serve them jolly well right. And as always the rules enforced by the CRASH judges must be obeyed, so there. Send all entries to **I WANT TO BE TOM CRUISE, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB**.





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ADDRESS ....

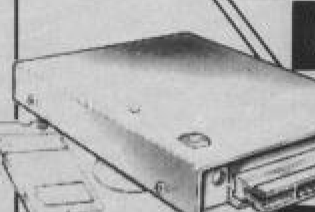
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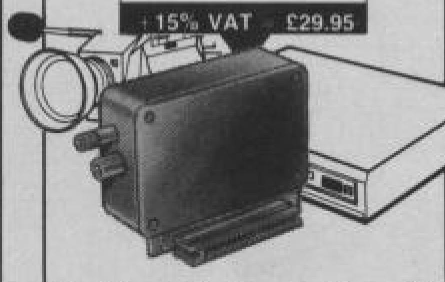
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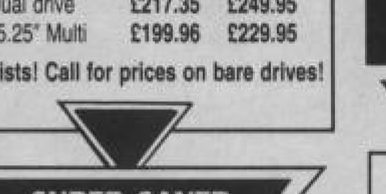
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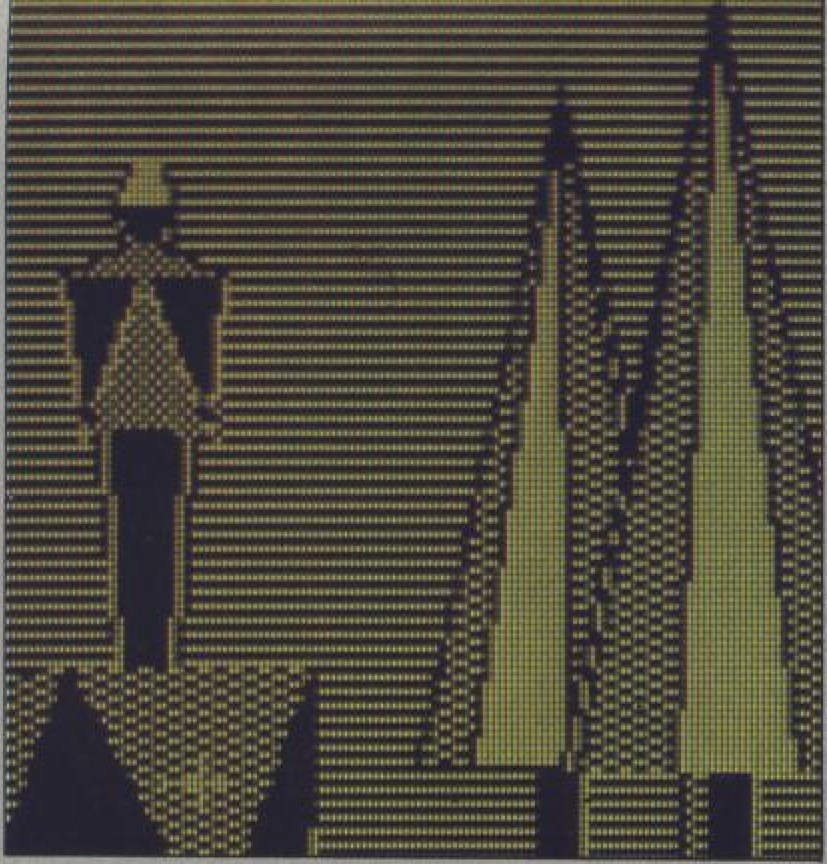
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COLLECTABLE CONSUMABLES

One of the most popular complaints in LM's forum has always been the price of software, and it's often been used as justification for pirating software. People falling into this reprehensible habit should now make a New Year's resolution to stop because the excuse is utterly pathetic nowadays. Virtually all the big games, and many of the lesser ones, now seem to be automatically rereleased either on budget, or in a compilation. 'Wait and ye shall receive' seems to be the motto for anyone wary of splashing out £10 on a single piece of software.

While compilations are around most of the year, Christmas and the New Year naturally draws the biggest releases with software houses showing off their 'greatest hits' – often with other companies' games to pad out a package. This practise is clearly vital to **Gremlin** who have no less than five anthologies coming out.

Greedy Gremlin

Perhaps due to the number of releases, Gremlin's titles show a distinct lack of imagination. ***10 Great Games 3*** is obviously the third in a ten game compilation series, but if the title doesn't set the blood racing some of the games should. From Hewson there's two written by Steve Turner; the acclaimed 1985 graphic adventure *Dragontorc* and the more recent *Gauntlet*-clone, *Ranarama*. Also from Hewson is Steve Crow's *Firelord*, a slightly more conventional arcade adventure.

Somewhat more surprising inclusions than those from Hewson, for whom Gremlin are now distributors, are two Spanish games. These are the boxing simulation, *Rocco* by Dinamic, and a 1987 US Gold game, *Survivors*.

Making up the rest of the tape are the classic flight sim from Digital Integration – *Fighter Pilot*, *Leader Board*, *Impossaball* and the disappointing *10th Frame*. While most of the big games here are rather old, if you haven't already got them this is pretty good value. Imaginative Gremlin title number two is ***Ten Mega Games*** which is a little more up to date with releases such as the flawed beat-'em-up *Hercules* and the well received *Blood Brothers*. The top two games are probably *Northstar* and *Cybernoid*, but *Deflektor* is an intriguing puzzle game well worth a look.

Strangely, both *Cybernoid* and *Northstar* are also featured on Gremlin's ***Space Ace*** collection. The five other five games include the excellent *Exolon*, Dominic Robinson's horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up *Zynaps* and the third MASK game – *Venom Strikes Back*. While fairly expensive, and with some rather mediocre games as padding, the good games more than make up for this.

Another theme-based collection is Gremlin's ***Flight Ace***. Also around the £15 mark this has just six games, most of which are quite long in the tooth. The only fairly recent game is the outstanding *ATF* which, with the helicopter sim *Tomahawk*, make this fairly respectable. Somewhat more dubious in value is the third in the 'Ace' theme trilogy – ***Karate Ace***. This has the classic, clone-inspiring *Way Of The Exploding Fist*, the excellent two-player *Bruce Lee* and the epic *Way Of The Tiger*, but these are all quite old. Much of the rest of the games are not much more recent, and generally of distinctly inferior quality. *Uchi Mata* is truly awful for example. Unless you're a die-hard beat-'em-up fan, it's probably not worth the £12.95 asking price.

The Midas touch

US Gold may have just two compilations out, but one of them is the massive ***History In The Making***, which at £24.95 is probably one of the most expensive Spectrum releases for ages. With 15 games the price-per-game is fairly reasonable, though, and the packaging with four tapes and a booklet is impressive. Unfortunately the games as a whole are weak. CRASH Smashes like the ancient *Beach Head, Raid Over Moscow* and the more recent *Gauntlet* fail to compensate for the mediocrity of the rest. This is an admirably wide-ranging history, but £24.95 seems a lot for the eight or so fairly good games – especially when most are now on budget.

Also from US Gold is the boastfully named ***Giants*** collection. Although all of the games are fairly recent releases, you only get five for just under 13 quid (tape version), while +3 owners have to fork out an extortionate 20 quid! Moreover the five are, under closer examination, a little dwarfish with only *720°* and *Out Run* of much interest.

A touch of class

Fists 'N' Throttles is the tantalizing title for a potpourri of five popular programs from **Elite**. You can bounce down the courses in *Buggy Boy* or perform dramatic motorbike leaps in *Enduro Racer*. Those feline cartoon stars, the *Thundercats*, also make an appearance. If you haven't got any of the games included then *Fists 'N' Throttles* represents good value for

money. Unfortunately, if you live in Germany, you won't get *Ikari Warriors*, as it was banned by the West German government (yet German instructions for the game are included in the package!).

Not to be outdone by their competitors, **Ocean** and **Imagine** have some sumptuous compilations of their own. The sequel ***Game Set And Match 2*** includes nine games ranging from a relaxing game of cricket in *Ian Botham's Test Match* to the bone-breaking grid iron action of American Football in *Superbowl*. Jon Ritman's fantabulous footy sim, *Match Day II* is also included along with the conversion of Sega's *Super Hang-On*. Burdened with some old and rather weak titles to fill it out this is still well worth considering.

Two sets of coin-op hits are being issued by Imagine. The first, ***Konami Arcade Collection***, has been available for a few months now, and encompasses ten hits of yesteryear, numbering no less than four CRASH Smashes among them. At £9.95 it offers attractive value for money.

Also from Imagine comes a slightly newer selection of games, all Taito coin-op conversions. ***Taito Coin-op Hits*** contains eight such games, of which two – *Flying Shark* and *Bubble Bobble* – are fairly recent, highly-acclaimed **Firebird** releases. *Breakout* fans will be tempted by the inclusion of *Arkanoid* and its sequel, *Revenge Of Doh*, while beat-'em-up fans should be excited by *Renegade*.

The final Ocean release, ***The In Crowd***, contains a real collection of street credible games. Primarily there's the beat-'em-ups *Target; Renegade* and *Barbarian*, along with the militarish, but very different, *Combat School* and *Platoon*. With *Karnov* adding a touch of colour, and *Gryzor* and *Predator* more jungle action it's well worth the usual Ocean asking price.

Lastly we come to those consistent suppliers of annual anthologies, **Beau Jolly**. ***10 Computer Hits – Volume Five*** brings together ten middle of the road offerings, with only . . . *Traz* standing out due to it being reviewed in this very issue! But Beau Jolly's pride and joy must be ***Supreme Challenge***, a superb collection of three true mega games (*Starglider*, *Elite* and *The Sentinel*) plus one puzzling (*Tetris*) and, of course, the obligatory flight sim (*Ace 2*). At around £2.50 a game it can't be bad – even if you were only getting those three biggies! I dread to see what the documentation will be like: both *Starglider* and *Elite* had novellas and very detailed instruction manuals, in an A5 box!

CRASH issue featured in, and review percentage given. N/R denotes not reviewed.

KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION

£9.95c	Imagine
Jail Break	38/47%
Green Beret	28/88%
Yie Ar Kung Fu	25/92%
Ping Pong	28/90%
Nemesis	40/59%
Shao-Lin's Road	37/67%
Hypersports	19/92%
Jackal	N/R
Yie Ar Kung Fu II	37/48%
Mikie	25/93%

TEN MEGA GAMES

£12.99c, £14.99d	Gremlin
Northstar	50/90%
Cybernoid	51/94%
Deflektor	47/77%
Triaxos	42/53%
Blood Brothers	54/85%
Mask II	48/81%
Tour De Force	49/66%
Hercules	54/54%
Masters Of The Universe	49/70%

SPACE ACE

£14.99c, £17.99d	Gremlin
Xevious	37/64%
Venom Strikes Back	53/91%
Cybernoid	51/94%
Northstar	50/90%
Zynaps	42/91%
Trantor – The Last Stormtrooper	46/68%
Exolon	43/90%

FLIGHT ACE

£14.99c, £17.99d	Gremlin
Air Traffic Control	N/R
Ace	32/81%
Spitfire 40	26/90%
Strikeforce Harrier	33/83%
Tomahawk	23/93%
ATF	50/89%

KARATE ACE

£12.99c, £14.99d	Gremlin
Way Of The Exploding Fist	21/92%
Bruce Lee	16/91%
Kung Fu Master	31/56%
Avenger	36/85%
Samurai Trilogy	45/49%
Uchi Mata	39/36%
Way Of The Tiger	28/93%

GIANTS

£12.99c, £19.99d	US Gold
Gauntlet II	49/65%
720°	47/81%
Rolling Thunder	50/47%
Out Run	49/72%
California Games	49/36%

FISTS 'N' THROTTLES

£12.99c, £14.99d	Elite
Ikari Warriors	51/76%
Buggy Boy	53/71%
Thundercats	46/91%
Dragon's Lair	34/54%
Enduro Racer	40/92%

GAME SET AND MATCH 2

£12.95c, £17.95d	Ocean
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Ian Botham's Test Match	N/R
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Arkanoid – Revenge Of Doh	51/80%
Renegade	44/89%
Bubble Bobble	45/90%
Legend Of Kage	37/50%

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Platoon	50/93%
Karnov	52/76%
Crazy Cars	52/65%
Target; Renegade	52/90%

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Traz	60/81%
Enlightenment: Druid II	49/68%

SUPREME CHALLENGE

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Tetris	50/77%
Ace 2	48/60%
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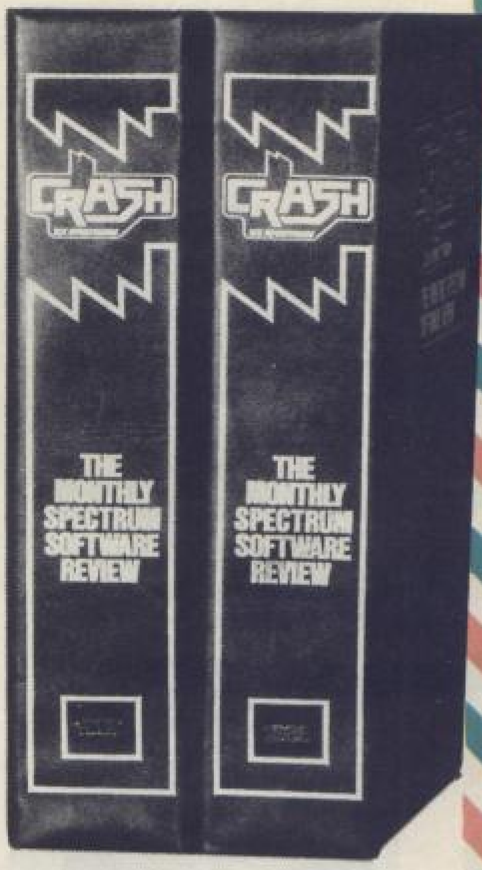
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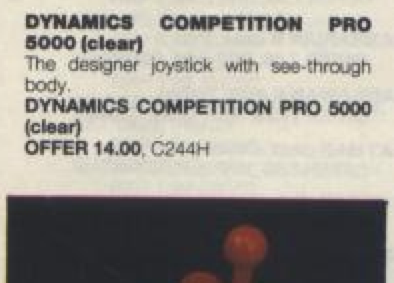
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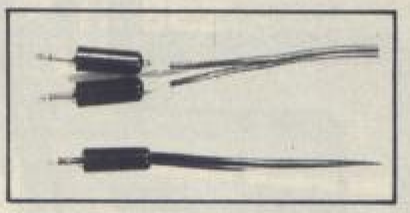


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Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi! Maps: Dan Dare, Cauldron II! SpecDrumming!

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Lloyd's Lookback! Spectrum Music! Maps: Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid!

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HOTLINE TOP 20

1 (1)	TARGET; RENEGADE	IMAGINE
2 (2)	MATCH DAY II	OCEAN
3 (4)	OUT RUN	US GOLD
4 (3)	CYBERNOID	HEWSON
5 (6)	RENEGADE	IMAGINE
6 (14)	ROADBLASTERS	US GOLD
7 (5)	BIONIC COMMANDO	CAPCOM
8 (13)	BUBBLE BOBBLE	FIREBIRD
9 (8)	MARAUDER	HEWSON
10 (9)	COBRA	OCEAN
11 (10)	COMMANDO	ELITE
12 (7)	PLATOON	OCEAN
13 (15)	DRILLER	INCENTIVE
14 (17)	HEAD OVER HEELS	OCEAN
15 (19)	DARK SIDE	INCENTIVE
16 (20)	ELITE	FIREBIRD
17 (12)	ZYNAPS	HEWSON
18 (11)	WIZBALL	OCEAN
19 (▶)	19 PART ONE – BOOT CAMP	CASCADE
20 (▶)	ALIEN SYNDROME	ACE

ADVENTURE TOP 10

1 (1)	THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
2 (8)	SPELLBOUND	MAD
3 (4)	THE PAWN	RAINBIRD
4 (2)	RED MOON	LEVEL 9
5 (3)	KNIGHT TYME	MAD
6 (6)	STORMBRINGER	MAD
7 (5)	RIGEL'S REVENGE	MASTERTRONIC
8 (7)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
9 (10)	HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE GAMES
10 (–)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND

STRATEGY TOP 10

1 (1)	VULCAN	CCS
2 (2)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
3 (4)	DESERT RATS	CCS
4 (3)	ARNHEM	CCS
5 (6)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
6 (5)	TOBRUK	PSS
7 (8)	REBEL STAR	FIREBIRD
8 (10)	THEIR FINEST HOUR	CENTURY HUTCHINSON
9 (7)	BATTLE OF BRITAIN	PSS
10 (9)	THEATRE EUROPE	PSS

VIDEO TOP 10

1 (1)	ALIENS	CBS/FOX
2 (2)	PLATOON	RCA/COLUMBIA
3 (3)	LETHAL WEAPON	WARNER
4 (5)	FULL METAL JACKET	WARNER
5 (9)	THE FLY	CBS/FOX
6 (6)	ROXANNE	RCA/COLUMBIA
7 (▶)	THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK	WARNER
8 (7)	NIGHTMARE ON ELM ST 3	WARNER
9 (8)	HELLRAISER	NEW WORLD
10 (▶)	DRAGNET	CIC VIDEO



WINNERS

*Hoorah for **John Callard** of Pudsey in Yorkshire! He is this month's lucky winner of the HOTLINE chart and wins a fabulous £40 worth of software plus a chic CRASH cap and a stunning T-shirt. Four fortunate runners-up also get caps and T-shirts, they are **D Austen** from Stamford in lovely Lincolnshire; **Scott Carruthers** of Sprowston, near Norwich; **Andrew Howard** from Exeter and **Tim Rymer** of Pudsey (crikey, what a coincidence!).*

*£40 worth of software is also on its way to **David Lochhhead** in Bournemouth. As the ADVENTURE chart winner he also receives a cap and T-shirt, as do the runners-up. They are **C Daly** from Ballyjolane in Cork, EIRE; **Simon Brown** of Southsea; **Anthony Woodcock** from Wakefield and **G Morris** of Barwell.*

*First out of the STRATEGY sack this month is **David Brown** from Stanford-Le-Hope. As well as a mind-bending £40 worth of software, he gets a super-trendy CRASH cap and Surfer T-shirt. The four lucky runners-up are **David Hickman** of bonny Bonnyrigg in Midlothian; **Colin Price** from Halesowen; **Matthew Payne** of Churchdown in Gloucestershire and **M Jasons** from Yarm.*

*VIDEO victor of the month is **Philip Tse** of London, who wins £40 of great software plus a trendy CRASH cap and Surfer T-shirt. Four runners-up also take away caps and T-shirts; they are **A Goode** of Southsea; **David Cox** from Bordon in Hampshire; **Ricky Wallace** of Northolt in Middlesex and **Mike Hewitt** from Port Talbot. All winners receive those mega-trendy CRASH caps and T-shirts.*

You now have FOUR charts in which to vote. For games featured in the main software review section vote in the HOTLINE chart. Games covered in Samara's Adventure Trail should be voted for in the ADVENTURE chart. And those games requiring specialised thought and planning (like war games) are voted for in the STRATEGY chart. Also, all your favourite videos can be voted for in the VIDEO chart – old and new, borrowed, but NOT blue!

Just fill in the appropriate form and send your votes off to **CRASH HOTLINE CHART, CRASH ADVENTURE CHART, CRASH STRATEGY CHART** and **CRASH VIDEO CHART**: ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.***

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CHART VOTING FORMS .... page 82

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SPECTRUM+2, Sinclair joystick, 2 interfaces, dustcover, over 100 games, worth £300, will sell for £170. N Baker, 80 Kenilworth Drive, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston, Derbys. DE7 4EW.

48K Spectrum, Turbo interface, tape recorder, joystick, 60 games worth £500, 30 mags, will sell for £220 ono, will separate games for a good price. Phone (0703) 558363 after 6pm if you are interested.

Spectrum 128K with Swift disk drive and interface, Multiface 128, joystick, computer tape recorder and £400 worth of original software. All this for £175 ono. Phone: 0703 550796

WE'VE GOTS LOADS of hints, pokes, and Multiface pokes. If you are interested send a SAE to A & I Computing, 28 Upton Rd, Atherton, Manchester, M29 9LN.

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Spectrum+2, £900 worth of software including 720, Bubble Bobble, Driller etc. Pro joystick interface, 3 joysticks, £70 worth of mags, excellent condition, everything together worth £1200, will sell for £300. Tel: Durham 3853465, ask for Ian. P&P extra.

Opus Discovery 48K & 128K, also backup interface, Masterfile disk, four blank disks, RAM Turbo interface and small cassette player, offers to B Mason, 64A (3) High St., Haddington, East Lothian Scotland EH41 3ED.

Spectrum 48K Lo Profile keyboard, plus tape recorder, Sinclair interface, Currah Micro Speech, Quickshot 1 joystick, Alfacom 32 printer, over 60 software titles including Gauntlet, Aufw. Monty, Revolution etc. Will accept £145. Phone (Edinburgh) 336 5984 between 4 - 6pm and ask for Paul.

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FOR SALE 128K Spectrum includes double tape recorder, Multiface 128, Genie 128, Specdrum, Timex 2040 printer, joystick interface, Quickshot 9 and over £450 in original software all for £200. Phone South Shields (091) 4542913.

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Specdraw Two! Monochrome art program for 48K Spectrum with Kempston joystick and Mcoder 2 by PSS. Send £4.00 cheque or postal order to: Darren Blake, 144 Ormesby Road, Caister on Sea, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 5NL.

YOUR SINCLAIR No 1 Jan 84 – No 21 Dec 85 £20, SINCLAIR USER No 42 Sep 85 – No 55 Oct 86 £20, 9 Gold Master SSDD Disks (not used) £9, 10 Maxell DSDD 135 TPI Disks (used) £10, to Mr. S.J. Nutting, 7 Narrow Close, Histon, Cambridge CB4 4XX.

Spectrum 48k for sale with SAGA 1 keyboard, joystick, interface, sound booster, data recorder, 30 games, nearly all Smashes. Phone 0955 5542.

Spectrum 128+2, 12 months, Kempston and Cheetah joysticks, 48K spectrum 45+ latest Speccy mags, 325 games worth £900+, Platoon, Outrun, Gryzor, Matchday 2, Leaderboard, Infiltrator, many more, £299 ono. Many extras. Telephone: Ade 0652 650496.

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Cheap original Spectrum games, maximum price £1 eg Matchday, Football Manager II, Nigel Mansell's, Indiana Jones. Also Crash issues 17+ at 70p each, send a SAE to Simon Griffin, 18 The Triangle, Gloucester GL2 0NE.

Spectrum +2, boxed, £400 of software including PAW, GAC, Aviator 1, books and latest games, Mach1+ joystick, loads of mags, altogether worth £650, sell for £300. Can deliver, phone Paul on (01) 985 0304.

Spectrum 48K with software (£1000+), hardware (£50+) and magazines/books (£100+). All worth £1,250+, will sell for only £250 ono! Tel: 0234 216889. Games include Bard's Tale, Road Blasters and other recent hits, all originals.

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48K Speccy/printer interface for Centronics, disk drive interface with snapshot (takes all drives), joystick interface, thermal printer, Interface 1, Microdrive (can supply disk drive if required), also much software £125. Call (evenings) 0268 680334.

Spectrum 128K, brand new Disciple 3.5" disk drive, lightpen, two joysticks, tape recorder, loadsa games on disk, worth OVER £1000, sell for £350 ono. For details write to J. Walker, 61 Linden Gardens, London W4 2EW. Thank you!

PEN PALS

Penpal wanted to swap Multiface pokes, tips, games, etc. Anyone got a map for Dun Darach? Please write to Paul Smith, 136 Commonfield Rd, Woodchurch, Birkenhead, Merseyside L49 7LP.

USER GROUPS

Utilities, programming, help, graphics, info, homegrown software for the more serious Spectrum user and much more! Monthly on Disciple (+), OPUS, Microdrive, cassette. £2 for your first issue of Outlet! Ron Cavers, 605 Loughborough Rd., Birstall, Leicester.

FANZINES

Free first issue 'Spectrum Games Player' Xmas Special. Over 20 pages of reviews, previews, tips, news, chat and other features, all for the price of SAE to C A Burke, 26 Carr Manor Place, Leeds LS17 5DL.

Basic Issue 4, The New Generation. Send cheque/PO/cash for £2.30 to: The ZX Spectrum Club, 18 Poplar Close, Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 0EW. Something new has begun.

Zat Programming – For all Spectrum owners. Issue 1 with Fergus McNeil interview. Issue 2 out December 1st. Send 40p plus stamp (payable to D. Ledbury) to: Zat Programming, PO Box 488, Tweedale, Madeley, Telford.

Tech Tap, the magazine over 90% of the readers think the mag is great. Enclose an SAE and send it to Kieran Wood, Spectrum Programmer, 30 Church St, Elsecar, Barnsley, South Yorks ST4 CHZ.

The Sequel Christmas Special – great fanzine with PBM, adventure, reviews, tips & features plus tape with three great games! Not to be missed – proceeds to Charity. Send £1.25 plus SAE for 26p to: 17 Lynton Drive, Southport, Merseyside PR8 4QP.

Egon Starblaster: A revolutionary new fanzine, it's so good, Issue 1 is free. Just send a self addressed envelope to 1 Highwell Road, Seaton, Devon EX12 2RR. Write now before you forget!

MISCELLANEOUS

Contributors wanted for new fanzine. Tips, pokes, peeks, adventure-solutions. You name it, we need it! Send it to:– Andrew Vincent, Playing Tips, Zat Programming, PO Box 488, Tweedale, Madeley, Telford (Rewards not great!).

Sex Orgy. Pro Golf PBM for thirty players, £1 to start up. SAE per turn there after. Send SAE to Richard Pugsley, 19A Wells Rd, Penny, Wolverhampton, West Midlands for details.

Rubik Clock Solution. Easy step by step solution. Just send 60p to cover postage and photo-copying to Steven, 20 Goodman Street, Llanberis, Gwynedd.

Actual match reports and souvenir programmes are only two of the fantastic features included in this two season old Football PBM. New season starts soon. Contact: Richard Stretton, 12 Ampleforth Gardens, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 OPJ.

It's A Crime! Hints and Tips. Gives your gang a head start. Send £1 plus an SAE to K Howard, 17 Moorfield Ave, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 2SP. Cheques, postal orders made payable to K Howard.

Poke Pack, loads' a pokes. Send a tape plus one SAE and £2 postal order (no cheques). First five replies only £1 payment. Send to Frank at 156 Threstle Road, Middleton, Leeds LS10 4HH.

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Star Soccer PBM, management game, new league starts soon. Send £1.50 for rulebook, 50p per session thereafter which includes SAE's contact: P. Curran, 76 Homestead Way, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0AQ. Telephone: 0689 46159.

PBM

RAIDERS OF THE LOST POST BOX

After last month's beginner's guide IAN LACEY gets back to indepth reviews of the latest PBM releases. First off there's the superb *Raiders Of Gwaras*, then there's a look at some new games from the IBM of PBM – KJC Games.

THIS FANTASY RPG is one of my favourite games. Called ***Raiders Of Gwaras*** it's set on the planet Gwaras and has me engrossed in both my character and its wider world. Players' characters are created by themselves and fitted into the world by *Raiders* GM, **Mike Richards**. This is done by giving your character a background, a family and detailed surroundings. There's a choice of over thirty races (most unique to the game) and one-hundred professions. Some of these equate to normal mage/fighter 'adventurers' but many do not, such as the politicians, courtiers and pirates.

The game has a very open format, with no rule over how silly/serious you want to be. The results of your moves come in the form of up to four printed pages of A4 paper, filled with wonderfully detailed descriptions.

NEOPHYTES WELCOME

The world of *Gwaras* is very much like a cross between many periods in our middle to late recorded history. All of the countries have their own history which fit in with the global changes. Background is generally extensive and lovingly detailed by the Game Master. In all, *Gwaras* has almost 2000 years of history, giving it a feel of authenticity no other game can touch.

Character generation has a slight feeling of *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, but is far more complex. You have all the usual statistics (DEXTERITY, BUILD, STRENGTH etc), plus roughly 30 more detailed ones. You then have characteristics based upon the four humours (Air, Water, Fire and Earth) which add great depth to your character, making him/her more enjoyable to roleplay. The whole system is very well designed so that both hardened roleplayers and newcomers will enjoy this. The GM is always willing to lend you a hand if you get stuck since he was a total newcomer to PBM when *RoG* started.

So if you want a game with plenty of thought, detail and interest, but don't want to pay through the nose for it, this is the one for you. A *Raiders* start-up pack costs £3, which includes a map, a rulebook and highly detailed character background. Turns are a mere £1.25 with no hidden extras. **MJR Games** can be contacted at **4 Higher Lidden Road, PENZANCE TR18 4NZ.**

BOBBY ROBSON NEEDED?

GAD Games are a rapidly-expanding little company with three games to their name now. The first is ***World Of Chaos*** which has been around sometime now, getting some great reviews in its playtest stage. It's a fantasy roleplaying game set around the six Isles Of Morden. With the start-up at £5 and turns at £1.20 it represents good value for money. The second game is the computer-moderated football management simulation ***Soccer Supremos***. It's a very run-of-the-mill footy game, but rulebooks are free so why not take a look. Turns are £1.20.

GAD's latest game is ***Invasion*** and is really *Risk* by mail. It's a very simple wargame and lots of fun. Still, I don't think it'll be a serious rival to ***Crisis*** – a more complex version of *Risk* from **Mystery and Adventure Games**. The cheaper *Invasion* is quite good though, with free rulebooks. Start-up costs £2 and turns are 80p. Moreover GAD Games have said that the first 30 players to pay their £2 start-up fee will receive an extra two turns, effectively pricing the start-up at 40p. The address is **GAD Games, Marland House, POUGHILL, Cornwall EX23 9EL.**

PBM TAKE-OVERS

KJC Games have been busy recently. After taking over ***Casus Belli*** they've got the game's designer, **David Bolton**, to redesign it. The result is now being launched as ***Crucible Of Destruction***, and is supposedly a far larger game than its predecessor.

Not satisfied with that KJC have bought the rights to three more games! ***Dawn Of The Ancients*** is a twelve-player computer-moderated fantasy wargame. Developed in America by **GSI** (***Earthwood*** designers) it sees all the great empires of world history starting out at the same time, vying for power. Twelve empires ranging from the Egyptians to The Huns to the Babylonians all battle against each other.

KJC's third new game is ***State Of War***. Set in America in the year 2000, a nuclear war has destroyed Europe, and left America in crisis. Twenty American states, fed up with the Federal government, have set out to rule America and make the world their own. You play one of those twenty states.

Finally there's ***Warlord***. Another wargame set in a post-holocaust world, a hundred players control countries who went underground for protection, and are just emerging. Guess what their objective is . . .

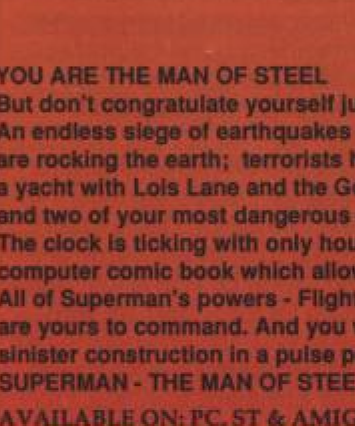
Crucible Of Power is due for release very soon, write for details. *Dawn Of The Ancients* costs £5 to start and turns are £1.50. *State Of War* is just out, costing £6 for a start-up with turns at £2. Lastly *Warlord* is just £2.50 per starter package with further turns at £1.25. KJC Games' address is **PO Box 11, Cleveleys, BLACKPOOL, Lancs FY5 2UL.**

See you next month when I'll be looking at ***Magelords Of Dorm*** and ***In Dubious Battle***, plus offers galore with loads of free start-ups. See you then . . .

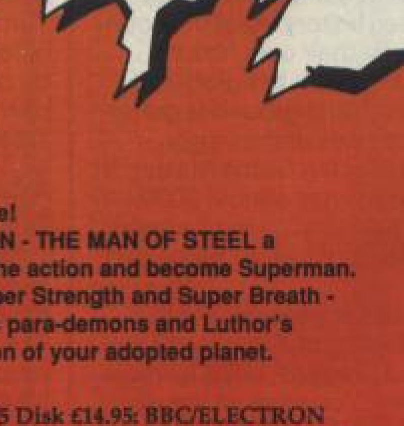


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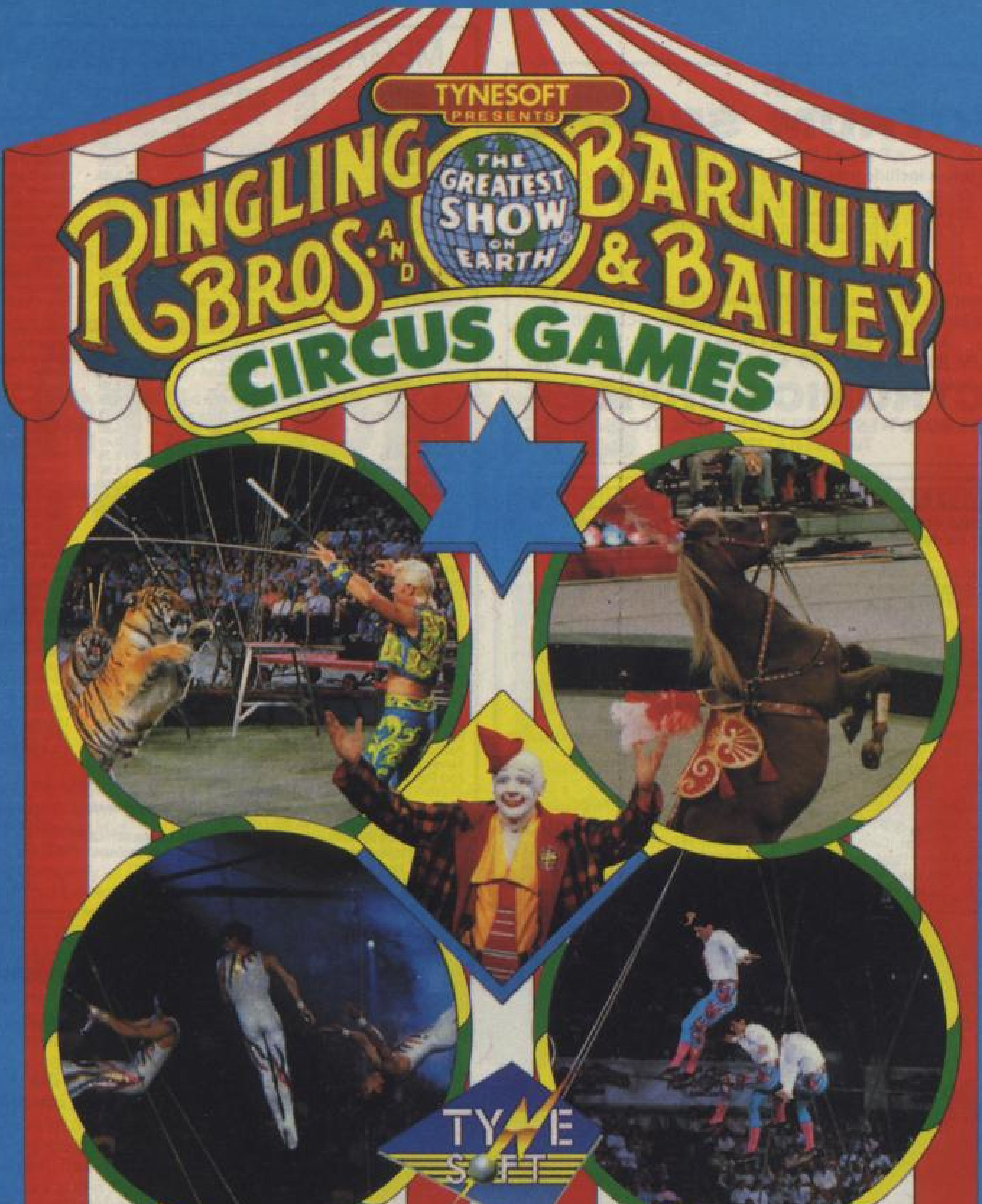






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FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS: 1989

As 1988 melted away like slush in the streets we got out our crystal ball to see what the coming year might bring. Sadly the weather seems to have spoiled the batteries so we had to turn, once more, to the foundation of modern civilization – the telephone.

For once the software house which never answers its phones did. **Telecom Soft** are the parent company of **Rainbird**, **Firebird** and **Silverbird** – besides being a subsidiary of BT. Heading for a Christmas release is Silverbird's ***Classic Dogfight***, a death or glory fight for survival at the controls of a World War I biplane, priced £1.99. Soon after that we should expect the poetically inspired ***Tyger Tyger***. Here the brave player will take the role of Lance Tyger, searching for a magic key to unlock the ogre's prison. Armed with a gun, flame thrower, bazooka and a few sticks of dynamite, can you succeed where others have failed? £7.99 will let you find out.

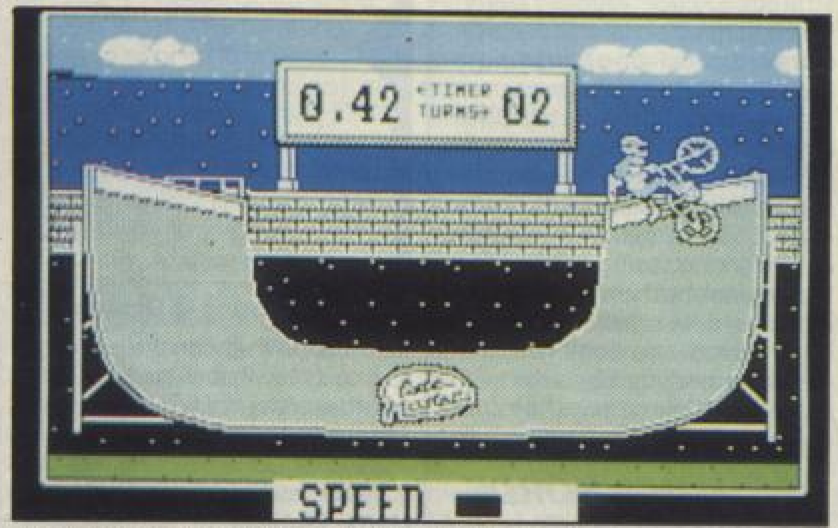
The strangest release, though, is ***Fish***. Here you play a goldfish in whose, uh, flippers (?) the fate of the world rest. As the latest **Magnetic Scrolls** release, it costs £15.99 on +3 disk. Even more eagerly awaited than that will be the conversion of the best 16-bit game of '88 – ***Starglider II***. The original game was even better on the Speccy than the ST, so let's hope for another brilliant conversion.

GOLDEN PROSPECTS

As you'd expect from **US Gold** they've got a veritable swarm (not quite what I mean, but you get the message) of glittering releases planned. While details are a little vague (now where's my game of *Scenario Simulator*?) the titles certainly sound interesting, so keep your eyes peeled for ***Last Duel*** (a racey racing game), ***Human Killing Machine*** (the follow-up to *Street Fighter*), ***Black Tiger*** (arcade adventuring), ***Forgotten Worlds*** (umm . . . forgotten, actually!, but like the previous three it's by GO!/Capcom), ***Games Summer Edition*** (more sporty action from the Epyx folks), ***Go! Crazy*** (yah, zip, weeee . . . (wallop, shut up – Ed)), and ***Out Run Europa*** (the follow-up to something memorable, but I've forgotten what it is . . .).

Also hoping for some New Year Smashes is the genuinely American software house **Electronic Arts**. They have four games planned for the first quarter of the year. First off there's ***Skate or Die***, here you start in Rodney's skate shop able to select your skateboard, check high score, register for competition or go for practise. There are five events to choose from including Ramp Freestyle, Downhill Race, and Ramp Hill Jump. Each is modelled on a professional skateboarding competition, but luckily on the computer there is no chance of you going elbow over shoelace. It's also cheaper than most boards at £8.95 cassette and £14.95 +3 disk.

Another sporty type game is ***Ferrari Formula One*** which brings together the full 1986 Formula One Grand Prix Season. The game will feature sixteen tracks (including Brands Hatch, Rio and Monaco), and an option to either test the car or race against some of the world's best drivers. Another ace simulator due to appear early next year is ***Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer***. This offers fourteen aircraft to choose from, including a Spitfire and an advanced experimental jet. You can either test these or race over six courses against six different computer controlled opponents – Chuck's away! And finally we've got the decidedly less-sophisticated ***Chainsaw Warrior***, allegedly a combination of Steve Austin (*The Bionic Man*) and Rambo. His mission is to save the world from killer zombies in less than an hour, but who'll save the world from him?



▲ **Trick riding in *BMX Freestyle* (Code Masters)**

GREENPEACE ON BUDGET

Interceptor (**Players**, **Pandora** etc) are keeping their cards close to their chests, but they have admitted to a release called ***Biosphere***.

Also keeping a low profile are **Incentive**. When I tackled them on the telephone I was told that 'we are enhancing the Freescape technique, and have big plans for 1989' (huh, haven't we all). Expect details as soon as we have them. And ditto for both **Hewson** and **Infogrames**. In fact Hewson are releasing ***Eliminator*** for a start, wonder why they wouldn't tell us?

One software house always happy to talk about their forthcoming releases are **Code Masters**. On the budget front expect ***BMX Freestyle*** and ***Death Stalker***. They also plan to produce a series of games throughout '89 based on the ▶

▼ **Be a darling and buy Code Masters' latest – *Death Stalker***



exploits of Dizzy, a small egg-shaped character first introduced in the game ***Dizzy*** (78%, Issue 46). (See, didn't mention 'eponymous' once!)

Titus, who allowed *Crazy Cars* to screech onto your Spectrum will soon have ***Fire and Forget*** whizzing around in your computer. Starring the Thunder Master as the ultimate driving/shooting hero, this is set over six battlegrounds filled with aggressive tanks and helicopters. Following close on its heels should be ***Galactic Conqueror***. Hopefully available in January it will apparently be 'a space arcade 3-D shoot-'em-up with lots of strategy to boot' (quote Titus's Ian Higgins). You take the role of a brave spacefaring hero who has to battle his way across many planets trying to stay alive long enough to get paid for the job in hand. After that February should see the release of ***Crazy Cars 2***. The sequel will be as full of rip-roaring racing action as the original, but new features will include skids, crashes, and the boys in blue – so don't get caught speeding, because even if they can't catch you they can set up road blocks.



▲ 24-hour racing in Ocean's *WEC Le Mans*

GREMLIN'S HORDE

Sheffield-based **Gremlin Graphics** have a busy few months ahead of them. Christmas will see the release of loads of compilations (see page 92) as well as ***Motor Massacre, Gary Lineker's Hot Shots, Techno Cop*** and ***The Muncher*** (previously billed as *T-Rex* – 80%, Issue 56). What can we expect to see in 1989, well early '89 wil see the release of two 'excellent **Magic Bytes** products, ***Paranoia Complex*** and the eagerly-awaited ***Tom And Jerry***. The eternal battle between feline and rodent will continue with this March release. In a more serious vein ***Hostile (Terrain Encounter), Dark Fusion***, and ***Butcher Hill*** should be with you 'soon'.

Imageworks, the new label from **Mirrorsoft**, plan even more death and destruction with the release of the coin-op conversion of **Atari Games/Tengen Inc**'s mega hit ***Blasteroids***. Their aim is to duplicate the coin-op game, and where possible enhance it . . . we can hardly wait!

Activision have been rather quiet for a while, but that's certainly going to change in 1989. Appearing on their Activision and **Electric Dreams** labels will be ***Incredible Shrinking Sphere, SDI, Time Scanner, Die Hard*** (licensed from the Twentieth Century Fox film starring Bruce *Moonlighting* Willis). On top of them there's conversions of five **Sega** coin-ops, namely ***Galaxy Force, Altered Beast, Hod Rod, Sonic Boom***, and ***Ace Attacker***.

▼ Post-apocalyptic racing action in Gremlin's *Motor Massacre*



OCEAN RACING

RoboCop, Operation Wolf and *Batman* are hard games to follow, but **Ocean** claim not to be worried. Firstly there's the coin-op conversion ***WEC Le Mans***, based on the 24-hour Le Mans race your aim is to screech around the track and burn up all opposition. Or if you'd prefer to bash a few Ninjas there's ***Dragon Ninja***. We saw the **Taito** arcade version and a very good game it is too, with plenty of martial art fun. Also due out is another of their big film licences – ***The Untouchables***. One computer game version has already been written, and scrapped because it's not up to Ocean's admirably high standards.

GRANDSLAM ARE GO!

'*Thunderbirds* are go' was the catchphrase echoed by thousands of young children every Saturday morning as they watched the daring exploits of Scott, Virgil, Alan, and the rest of the Tracey family, as International Rescue blasted off into danger. And indeed many kids are still thrilling to the adventures with the Thunderbird episodes now available on video. **Grand-**



▲ Street fighting in America with *Dragon Ninja* (Ocean)

slam are obviously all *Thunderbirds* fans, because in February they plan to release ***Thunderbirds*** – the computer game. The story joins the famous Tracey family in a four-way-scrolling graphic adventure in which The Hood has made a video of the Thunderbird craft whilst they are on a rescue mission. Being more camera-shy than Michael (photography) Parkinson the Traceys have to get this film. But things aren't always easy in the hero business, because as they chase Mr Hood a series of natural disasters call for International Rescue's attention. But at least Lady Penelope and her Parker-chauffeured pink Rolls Royce are on the Hood's trail as well. So will the Traceys avert a global disaster whilst nabbing the villainous Hood, or will Parker h'accidentally crash the Roller h'and ruin Lady Penelope's new hair-do. Find out when the game arrives in February.

Based on the novel by one of the masters of the macabre **Stephen King**, *The Running Man* is the latest film to star ex-Mr Universe contestant and all round nice guy Arnold Schwarzenegger. It is also the latest blockbusting movie licence to be snapped up by Grandslam. Set for release in early 1989, ***The Running Man*** will place you in the year 2019 as Ben Richards, a state policeman who is arrested for refusing to fire on a group of unarmed demonstrators whilst on crowd control duty. The favourite game show in 2019 is a bloody entity known as *Running Man*, with innocent people conveniently being dubbed 'criminals' for the sake if this show. These are then hunted through a maze of dungeons and caves by sadistic villains for the entertainment of a bloodthirsty audience. And guess who has been put into this nightmare situation? It will take all of your skill and cunning to survive this one Arnie. If it's anywhere near as good as the film, then you'd better start saving up!



GHOSTS 'N' MUNSTERS

Palace, after the hack 'n' slash fun of *Barbarian II*, will have two games on release in the new year. First on their **Outlaw** label will be ***Cosmic Pirate***, a swashbuckling tale of life in the starry void. You will have the chance to play an infamous space pirate who zips around in his little star trolley blasting all who get in his way. To be even better at this you should do a little trading to acquire yet bigger and better weapons.

Secondly, and on their own label, Palace will be releasing ***Monster Museum***, a macabre little tale in which you play an unfortunate individual who accidently gets locked in a museum for the night. Well, you decide to make the best of it and wait until the owner appears in the morning. But unable to sleep you decide to go for a bit of a wander and explore the spooky looking place. Suddenly you are attacked by the exhibits who have eerily come to life. It then becomes a case of staying alive long enough to see the morning, and as the exhibits have a nasty habit of trying to kill any mortal souls they find, the chances of survival seem pretty slim.

And speaking of spooky happenings, **Alternative Software**'s new label **Again, Again** will soon be releasing the computerised version of the hit Channel 4 series ***The Munsters***. Mockingbird Lane is a quiet suburban area filled with well manicured lawns and Elm-shaded streets, so what on earth is that large Victorian monstrosity doing there? The building in question is No 43 Mockingbird Lane, and to see anything more monstrous than the building, you have to look inside and take a peek at the occupants. There's Herman Munster, the head of the Munster household whose favourite pastime is digging, then there's his wife Lily, an ordinary (!!) housewife and mother to their son Eddie, who with pointed ears and fangs will probably grow up to be the family Wolfman. Grandpa Munster is a Vampire, he is also the family practical joker, though luckily time has dimmed his memory, so his former evil powers are now used for harmless mischief. Finally there's Marilyn who is the niece of Herman and Lily, but with a creamy complexion, rosy cheeks, blue eyes, and long blond hair, she looks most un-Munster like, but the family love her. Ahhh.

That's the family introduced, but what about the game? Well, Marilyn's gone missing and you must go and find her. If you're told any more than that, we'd have a tough time writing an interesting review next month! So, until the next time we meet . . .




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